



Campsis

NEWSLETTER

Association of Friends of Botanic Gardens Inc.

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PRESIDENTS REPORT

Special Thanks to All Committee Members

All over Australia there are groups of Friends, not all members of the AFBG, but they are still volunteering their time to support Botanic Gardens, Arboretums or other Public Gardens.

These are passionate people who develop and share in numerous activities which directly or indirectly support and benefit their particular gardens and the community. Many people bring special talents or experience to committee positions, while others slog on with determination and hard work, but gain from the shared experience. There are also those who make significant contributions but decline to accept committee positions, sometimes because of time constraints, or the feeling they will 'never get off' the committee, or it is just not their thing.

Some of these problems are of course minimised where it is known that the committee rules state a limited time for periods of appointment and the meetings are well led. Of course it is important and responsible for Committees/ Organisations to be incorporated bodies to provide legal protection for their committee and members in their volunteer capacity.

It is difficult for any group to achieve their objectives without a well structured and effective committee, so it is appropriate to offer a special vote of thanks to every person who is serving, or has served, on a committee.

However if you are yet to serve on your Friends committee please consider standing for office, where you can broaden your experience, sharing both the work load –and some of the frustration –but also the considerable satisfaction that comes with a hard won goal achieved.

May you enjoy the fruits of your labours and continue to enjoy your chosen gardens.

Alex Smart President

FROM THE SECRETARY

Pleased to note two new contributors to *Campsis*, Friends of Maroochy Gardens in Queensland and Sale Gardens Victoria and also St Arnauds return after a long 'drought'.

AFBG membership numbers stand at 47, but I am hopeful of some increase in the next few months. It is however interesting to look at the statistics most of you have completed on the Membership Renewal Form and compare them with those 4/5 years ago.

While individual membership numbers continue to fluctuate and the percentage of members over 60 years remains at 70-90%, the volunteer activities have expanded. To name a few, more gardens have guides, 'hands on' work and community planting projects, there are Friends involved in catering, reception duties, Botanic Art Classes and Herbarium and seed bank collection. Most pleasing is local acknowledgment of the significant role Friends play, where members have representation on Council/Parks Advisory or project control committees.

As with many complex organisations I have been having some difficulty retrieving the annual AFBG membership fees, -some take 4-5 months after the due date Dec 31st and require time consuming reminders.

The yellow Membership renewal forms are included in October/November issue of *Campsis* to our reduce postage costs -and in attempt to catch payment -due Dec 31st, before committees retire over the Christmas/New Year period.. Thank you to the 30-40% who respond quickly.

I am aware that the frequency of members meetings varies widely and things can become mislaid, however I would appreciate your help with early payment.

While the regional Friends groups may vary considerably in size, configuration and finance, the passion and commitment of the volunteers does not. Friends' capacity to pursue and persuade, to convince and to promote and deliver projects for their local Botanic Gardens and community, never fails to amaze.

Some recent examples are, St Arnaud Queen Mary Garden, in a seriously drought stricken area, now have an old water source re-commissioned and the water piped to the garden, at Kyneton, the caravan park will be relocated out of the 19C gardens area and Bendigo Gardens- finally have a Master Plan - the list of achievements is endless.

Perhaps our political masters could do with the assistance of a few Friends!

NB: Please read the Research Project article below and consider participating in the survey which I believe should ultimately provide some outcomes and strategies beneficial to Friends groups in general. The Association and BGANZ will receive the final results.

See details to contact the researcher directly.

More information will be circulated possibly by email or on the AFBG website.

Don't forget National Guides Conference in Hobart this year Nov 9-13th.
'Pencil in' AFBG Conference in Mildura May 21-23rd 2010

Hoorah for some rain- that is- for we in the dried out southern climes!

Annie McG, Secretary

FRIENDS OF SALE BOTANIC GARDENS

Central Gippsland, Victoria

Many residents in Wellington Shire will have witnessed the beautification of Sale's Botanic Gardens over the past few years, however there is a large portion of the community that may not realise the history the gardens hold.



Sale Botanic Gardens overlooking Lake Guthridge.

2010 is the Sale Botanic Gardens 150th birthday. The Friends are in the process of organising a calendar of events to celebrate this. Over the one hundred and fifty years of the Sale Botanic Gardens existence, the precinct has had a varied history. Established with the assistance of William Guilfoyle and Ferdinand von Mueller, the Gardens were one of the earliest regional botanic gardens in Victoria. At one stage it was used as a golf course and later featured an enclosure for local fauna. The latter event caused the gardens to be known as "The Fauna Park" a notion that, is not entirely true, as this is just a small feature of the picturesque gardens.

As part of a state government funded project Andrew Laidlaw (Royal Melbourne Botanic Gardens Landscape Designer) has recently designed new display beds. Preparation work has begun with planting via community planting days to occur in May-June this year. The new gardens will help promote 'Sustainable Gardening' showcasing low water use plants suitable for people's home gardens. The project continues the renaissance of the SBG commenced in 2002.



Children brought their teddies along to the gardens to share the day

The Friends Group meet on the second Thursday of every month and encourage new members to join.

Katherine Marshall (03) 5142 3333.

The SBG Friends Group recently organised a Teddy Bears picnic, with the intention of raising the community's awareness of the gardens, as well as having some fun. The day was attended by 180 primary school children, as well as many parents and teachers and was a great success. Children participated in various activities while the Sale City Band performed.

This very successful event was organised by the Friends Group with assistance from Wellington Shire Council.

RESEARCH PROJECT ON BENEFITS OF VOLUNTEERING

**Centre for Tourism & Leisure Management
University of South Australia**

The Centre for Tourism and Leisure Management at the University of South Australia is presently working on a one-year research project titled;
Botanic Gardens and Senior Australians: Benefits and Growing Communities.

The study involves active research into seniors' engagement with botanic gardens within the scope of productive ageing through voluntary work. Funded through a Research Grant with the National Seniors Productive Ageing Centre (National Seniors Australia), the project will be conducted between September 2008 and September 2009. With a focus on the benefits that senior Australians (defined as those over 50 years of age) gain from volunteering at botanic gardens, the research will also explore the consequent benefits to botanic gardens and the local community.

Focus groups with volunteers have already commenced at several botanic gardens, with the next step being the wider distribution of a written questionnaire to garden volunteers throughout Australia (May and June 2009). If your garden is one of the participants in this research, your assistance in completing the questionnaire and returning it via the reply paid envelope will be greatly appreciated.

If the levels of engagement seniors have with botanic gardens is better defined, then initiatives can be considered to maximise personal, organisational, and community benefits. When recorded systematically, it will enable this to be replicated within a range of gardens and communities. These outcomes will improve our understanding of healthy ageing for seniors in their volunteering roles, and as participants in active recreational activities such as walking, photography and incidental learning in botanic gardens.

If you would like further information or would like to involve your Friends group in the survey, please feel free to contact me by phone or email. We hope to have a large number of volunteers participate, and look forward to sharing the results with you later in the year.

Emily Moskwa
Emily.moskwa@unisa.edu.au
08 8302 3319

Jayne Salmon OAM

It is with some pleasure we note that Jayne received an OAM in the recent Australia Day Awards, for services to Geelong through the Geelong Botanic Gardens. A very worthy recipient, Jayne is both a long standing President of Geelong Friends and Guide at the Royal Botanic Gardens Melbourne. Jayne also served on the Association Committee for some years and throughout has constantly championed the cause of Botanic Gardens and Friends groups.



Jayne at the opening of the Hidden in Plain ViewFlora exhibition at the Gordon Gallery Geelong

FRIENDS OF ADELAIDE BOTANIC GARDENS

Adelaide City, South Australia

Under the leadership of our new President, Helena Jenkinson, the Friends are continuing with the good work so ably undertaken by our Immediate Past President, Lesley Hawkins and it would be remiss of me if I did not, on behalf of the Friends acknowledge the sterling work which Lesley and her committee did during her three years “at the top”. Lesley continues on as a member of the Friends Committee and represents our interests on the committee of the Adelaide Botanic Gardens Foundation.

The Strategic Plan prepared under Lesley’s stewardship has been reviewed and will continue to guide the organisation until 2010. A recent questionnaire sent to members had a pleasing response and raised a number of interesting facts. One which could have been foreseen, perhaps, was the fact that the age class of 30 to 45 is not well represented in our membership. Another comment which the Friends Committee intends to act upon this year is the need to offer more events and functions for those members who are still in the workforce.

The various Groups within the Friends are “beavering away”. The Guides are guiding, often with a theme to complement an event taking place in Adelaide, such as the recent Hans Heysen inspired walk which complemented an exhibition in the State Art Gallery and new members tours are also proving popular. The Crafters are crafting and preparing material for sale. The Growing Group is busy growing and recently held a plant sale at Mount Lofty Botanic Garden. The Botanical Art Group goes from strength to strength. The recently formed Community Events Group ensures that the Friends have a presence at various shows and such events in the Adelaide metropolitan and outer metropolitan region, including most recently the ABC Garden Show. The Tours Group continues to organise trips, both day long and extended, to places of interest to members.

A recent exhibition and sale in North Lodge of Jan Woodman’s paintings and prints to coincide with the launch of her book “nature Revealed”, proved to be most popular and also provided a source of much – needed funds for us. We are very grateful to Jan for her continued support of the Friends and her generosity to us.

While on the subject of North Lodge, it will be of interest to learn that a very enthusiastic group is researching the history of that historic building, with the intention of mounting an exhibition called “Children of the Lodge”. Early signs are that this will prove to be a most interesting exhibition. The History Group continues its work and the Oral History project is advancing well.

Talks to members have been well attended and have involved some fascinating speakers. Robert Hatcher, a recipient of a Gwen Thomas Bursary, spoke on his attendance at the International Rhododendron Conference in Edinburgh and his peregrinations afterwards through the USA, Ireland Scotland and China looking at this wonderful genus. In November Michael Shanahan from Zoos SA, told an interested audience about the development of the Westpac Envirodome at the Adelaide Zoo and in February, Mr Bill Tait, former Head of the Herbaceous Department at the Royal Botanic Garden, Edinburgh, Scotland gave an excellent illustrated talk on Gardens of Tuscany and Umbria.

On 10th March members enjoyed a “Twilight Meeting” at which, following a glass of wine and some light refreshments, those present enjoyed a talk given by Head of Gardens

Simon Habel, on the international trade in wildlife. We are looking forward to a talk in May by Steve Forbes, ABG Director and have the program set until the end of this calendar year.

This brief note will help to demonstrate that the Friends of the Botanic Gardens of Adelaide are indeed 31 years young!

Ed McAlister
Gazette Editor

FRIENDS OF GEELONG BOTANIC GARDENS

Corio Bay, Victoria

Although the Geelong Region is desperately short of water and residential gardens and small public parks are in a bad state the Botanic Gardens have provided an oasis for the local community and visitors from afar by providing wonderful shade and green lawn areas. Our Heritage Trees and Garden has been watered while the 21st Century Garden has survived on minimal water to specific plants once a week.

Friends of Geelong Botanic Gardens FGBG have been extremely busy over the summer months with events to enhance the community's enjoyment and understanding of our beautiful gardens.

Our Voluntary Guides presented a new walk 'Plants of the Aboriginal People' on two occasions in January. Permission was sought from the Wathaurong, Aboriginal Co-operative in Geelong who visited the GBG to help with understanding of indigenous culture. The walks were very well attended.

Twilight Music on three Sunday during February was organised by the Friends for the tenth consecutive year. The Musicians, one Irish Group and two Jazz groups this year, really enjoyed playing at the GBG and asked if they could return next year. The Musicians enjoy the beautiful outdoor setting, relaxed atmosphere and appreciative audience. Patrons pay an entry fee at the Gate, bring their own chairs and picnic or they can purchase sausages and wine from the Friends' Teahouse. Music at the GBG is an event not to be missed in Geelong.

On 25th February we invited illustrator, author and historian Robert Ingpen AM to open



Robert Ingpen AM and guests and the 'curiosity box'

the Touring Exhibition from the State Botanical Collection, RBG Melbourne, "Hidden in Plain View", The 'Forgotten Flora which we are hosting at the Gordon Gallery of TAFE.. This beautiful exhibition is here until 8th April so there has been a great commitment by FGBG to ensure that the Exhibition is manned every day for this period of time.

Hidden in Plain view focuses on the bryophytes, fungi and lichens and visitors are encouraged to explore this hidden world through a series watercolour and pen and ink illustrations, historical books, botanical records and three dimensional displays.

The Exhibition has been enhanced with lunchtime Floor Talks each Wednesday. There have been two talks by the Curators of the exhibition, a talk by Botanical Illustrator John Pastoriza-Pinola, a talk on Fungi as Food, and another by our Education Officer Ro Noone titled “Weird and Wonderful. There has also been a “Cooking with Mushrooms” demonstration at the GBG and two special guided walks discovering the “Hidden Flora”.

Our Friends’ Nursery has most of its plants on a database. Liz Bennetto assisted by a small group of Growers has been responsible for introducing this great improvement to our operations. The Melbourne Growing Friends have provided advice and software. We look forward to a bumper Autumn Plant Sale at the end of March.

Our Activities sub-committee continues to organize speakers and excursions for our members and visitors. We look forward to a talk by Alistair Watt on his recent plant collecting tour to China and a tour of our local wetlands which are managed by Alcoa.

The GBG perennial border deserves special mention as it continues to display beautiful plants for the public to enjoy. We are indeed fortunate to have a group of Friends with the skill and knowledge to maintain a very vibrant and interesting border.

Jayne Salmon
President

THE AUSTRALIAN ARID LANDS BOTANIC GARDEN

Port Augusta, South Australia

Influencing change and the wisdom of youth

There is no denying that the young adapt to change far quicker than the old. This statement applies not only to people but to business and also to botanic gardens. The Australian Arid Lands Botanic Garden is indeed a young garden, her gates opening to the public just over 12 years ago. What role today, does such a young garden have to play? What wise messages can be learnt from one so young and what are the changes that this garden can react quickly to and that others may struggle with?

For those not familiar with The Australian Arid Lands Botanic Garden it is situated at Port Augusta on the Stuart Highway, just north of the cities urban edge. The garden covers approximately 250 hectares and extends into the Spencer Gulf. Large sections of the site contain natural vegetation and diverse natural systems, from sand dunes to clay pans and from Chenopod (saltbush) plains to mangrove colonies. It may in fact be unique in the world for encompassing desert and marine plant collections.

The role of this garden is best summed up in its mission statement – ‘to provide a facility for the conservation of a collection of Australia’s arid zone flora, including threatened species and plant communities. It is to increase popular and scientific understanding of the arid zone environment through education on a regional, national and international

level and the promotion of arid zone plants by fostering appreciation and research into their special qualities and horticultural potential'. That sounds like quite a big job and a fairly important mission for one so young, indeed it is a role that the AALBG is taking on seriously and turning into reality.

The AALBG in a nutshell, is there to conserve Australia's arid zone flora, to educate about the importance and relevance of this flora and to promote this flora. It is ideally placed to do so in that geographically it is on the edge of the arid regions.

For conservation it is climatically suited to species that require low rainfall and also geologically suited, with its well drained sandy soils. The AALBG is ideally placed to educate, in that Port Augusta is a cross road for major tourism and has reasonable proximity to major population bases. It is ideally placed to promote arid plants because of access to arid plant material, the space to do research and the right climate and conditions to produce plants that have both scientific and horticultural potential.

The wise messages that can be learnt from this garden are many and are not just to do with plants. Our Award winning Visitor Centre is a fine example of modern environmentally friendly architecture. Features such as rammed earth walls, solar orientation, solar power and rainwater storage combine with low water usage taps and natural internal materials.

Our plant collection reflects arid zones throughout Australia, the areas with rainfall of 250mm or less. There is a vast wealth of flora in these regions with plants that have developed remarkable adaptations to cope with very little and unreliable rainfall. We would be foolish to ignore the lessons that such plants can reveal and we would be even more foolish to try and persevere with growing the enormous range of thirsty exotic plants that currently fill our nurseries. The AALBG recently registered the name 'AridSmart' and this name is being used to promote a new series of water wise gardens just recently completed. The term 'AridSmart' was coined to start the process of changing the negative perceptions about what we consider arid into something positive and desirable. The word arid means – 1. Having little or no rain, dry parched with heat. 2. Devoid of interest. Obviously not desirable elements within themselves however the plants that are the products of such an environment with low demands for water are of extreme value and certainly not devoid of interest.

Our AridSmart gardens we believe are the first gardens in this country to show the public what can be achieved by using purely arid zone plants to achieve a great look in a variety of garden styles and settings. They use a range of water saving features such as a range of mulches, subsurface irrigation, design techniques and of course exploit natural plant adaptations for low rainfall. There are six gardens in all with each one covering just over 100 square metres, so visitors can see them as something on a scale with their own gardens. Each garden has a different theme and they cover informal, semi formal and formal styles. Garden one is the Desert Garden, inspired by red sands and sun bleached timber with plants generously spaced and ephemerals a feature. Garden two is the 'Mallee Garden' with its swathes of lemon grass (*Cymbopogon ambiguus*) and beautiful mallee eucalypts, designed for those that want their own urban mallee woodland.

Gardens three and four are the formal courtyard gardens complete with benches and classical urn. These gardens will highlight what arid species are suitable for clipped hedges and even topiary. Garden five is the Flinders Ranges garden, inspired by the natural and rugged beauty of an ancient landscape and designed to attract wildlife. The

last garden is the informal 'Coastal Garden' surprising to many that are not aware of Australia's vast stretches of coastline that are classed as arid and semi arid. All of the plants used in these gardens are available for sale from The Friends of the Australian Arid Lands Botanic Garden, all of the materials used in construction are commonly available and the technology is affordable. The gardens are experimental and the plant material may change as we work towards developing arid species that can become the favourites of the future, a future with a rapidly changing climate.

We are lucky that we are a young garden, just look around at the botanic gardens of all major towns and cities. They are filled with European trees, shrubs and lawns, plants that will not cope with what's to come. The Australian Arid Lands Botanic Garden is striving to change the gardening habits of lifetimes and we can put all of our resources and concentration into influencing the future and not into managing the past. Sounds pretty wise to me!

Michael Anlezark
Curator

FRIENDS OF THE MACKAY REGIONAL BOTANIC GARDENS

Central Coast, Queensland

Once again our Friends group has a very busy calendar planned for the coming year. Many extra planting bees will take place to ensure our Gardens are looking spectacular when the BGANZ conference is held in Mackay in October.

Carols in the Gardens was held as usual on the Saturday before Christmas, when an enthusiastic crowd enjoyed themselves despite the extreme heat we were experiencing. A photographic competition was held which culminated on that evening – Friends wanted a postcard of the Gardens to sell in the souvenir shop, so the call went out for digital images



Carols in the Gardens

taken in the Gardens. These were then displayed on boards for the public to vote which one they liked best – this lovely image of the bird roosting poles in the waters of the Eulamere Regional Wetlands was the winner. It is now on sale, along with the two other images selected as runners up.

Maya Harrison was appointed the new Visitor Services Officer last November. Maya was a pre-school teacher for 19 years before taking this position and has a wealth of knowledge and great enthusiasm for her job. She ran some wonderful workshops with young children over the Christmas school holidays and has equally exciting plans for future school breaks.

A very successful guided walk through Palm Walk, followed by an evening barbecue, opened this year's events at the Gardens. The weather behaved and we all enjoyed the company, especially as we were able to welcome some new Friends to the group.

Mackay has been blessed with a very good wet season and we were lucky enough to avoid cyclone Hamish, so there has been no wind damage. The growth of all the plants has been phenomenal – what a shame the weeds grow even faster! January to mid-March has delivered us 1.25 metres of rain – not as much as last year – but still we feel for those southern areas experiencing fires and drought – as we received many messages after the Mackay flood of last year.



Eulamere regional wetland

The first Friends planting bee of 2009 occurred under a (rare so far this year) sunny sky on March 14. 16 Friends and Gardens staff participated in phase 3 of the Gymnosperm Forest and Palm Walk planting bee. Rare palms, some very showy cycads and various additions to the precinct's monocot collection together tally 150 new plants in the ground. It was great to see new faces along to boost our regular helpers on the day.

Other volunteer planting bees by SGAP Mackay branch members in February and March added another 65 plants to the Regional Forest, Brigalow Belt and Dumbleton Rocks gardens, with local natural environment community volunteers lending a hand with planting and weeding our Coastal Lowlands habitat riparian gardens in early April.

The Friends planting bee on April 4, planted the first of our fascinating Ethno-botanic gardens – this bed features the medicinal plants used by Indigenous peoples and the early European settlers.

The Horticulture Reference Group is holding regular monthly meetings and planning is well under way for Stage 3 "Meadowlands", construction of which hopefully will start in 2010.

There are so many ways the Friends are involved directly with our Botanic Gardens – from the Herbarium and horticultural data entry, to events and school visits, to getting their hands dirty with planting bees. Coming up to our 6th birthday – it's amazing how vital our small but dedicated band of Friends have become!

Robin McWhinney
Secretary

FRIENDS OF ST ARNAUD & QUEEN MARY GARDENS

St Arnaud, North Central Victoria

These are testing times for the gardens of St Arnaud, what with no rainfall for over two months, water storages at less than 5%, stage four water restrictions and weeks of 40° heat. Both our landscapes have suffered, but the Queen Mary Botanic Gardens are more noticeable than Pioneer Park, which Edna Walling, with commendable foresight, planned as a dry garden. To top it all off, vandals broke the sword off our new bronze statue of Marshal St Arnaud, which has pride of place in the gardens.

But help is on the way. We managed to persuade our gardens-friendly Council to spend a windfall water grant on re-commissioning the old goldfields reservoir on the edge of town. It's been empty and disused for years since the town went on to the Grampians Water system. But with relatively little trouble, the bank has been rebuilt and a pipe laid the two kilometres to bring the water down to the pond in the gardens in the centre of town. From there it will be pumped on to the gardens and they will bloom once more.

Meanwhile the Friends have been busy fundraising. Our annual Gala Day fundraiser was held on the 21st March in the gardens and throughout the year a team of energetic volunteers has been collecting sheep manure from local woolsheds and selling it to local gardeners, bringing in nearly two thousand dollars.

Our big project this year, in line with the recommendation of the conservation and management plan prepared for the gardens by Kevin Walsh, is to label all the trees and major shrubs in the gardens with their botanical and common names. This is an expensive and arduous task but will at last return the gardens to their role as an educational model of what will 'do' in the Wimmera.

So given sufficient rain to fill our refurbished reservoir we will be very much back in business and ready to start a major replant of the gardens. Marshall St Arnaud has had his sword recast and with a new heritage fence around him, is able to look imperiously at the passing population of the town that bears his name. Or is he, in true French style, just dreaming of past lovers, of which there were, apparently, many?

FRIENDS OF AUSTRALIAN NATIONAL BOTANIC GARDENS

Canberra City A.C.T

The Future of ANBG

Concern remains about resourcing of the Australian National Botanic Gardens (ANBG). Over the past 12 months, Friends' Council has continued its campaign to demonstrate to Government the very high level of public support for ANBG and the need for increased funding. A new ANBG Management Plan is currently being developed and it is anticipated that it should be released around the end of 2009. ANBG is conducting consultations as part of the process and has called for submissions from the public. The

Friends submission can be seen on the website. The outcome of this new Management Plan will be vital for the future directions of ANBG and its contribution to major issues such as native flora and climate change.

Lunchtime talks

Talks are held every Thursday from the start of February until the end of November. These talks inform Friends and the public about important issues and also raise significant funds for projects at ANBG. The program of talks for 2009 is on the website.

Wattle Day

A special event will be held on Wattle Day 2009 (1 September), with the unveiling of an *Acacia pycnantha* artwork by Lynne Stone and the mounting of a special exhibition on wattle in the Visitor Centre.

Botanic Art Groups:

The Art Groups' second exhibition of work will be opened in the Visitor Centre Gallery on 31 March 2009 by the Friends Patron, Mrs Marlena Jeffery and will run until 15 April. The first exhibition in 2008 was highly successful.

Financial Support for the Gardens

The Friends have continued to identify projects to support the ANBG, including;

- Spring flower display – a display that featured Sturt's Desert Pea and varieties of daisies was very well received in 2008 and may be repeated in 2009.
- Lichen website - This will complement the websites on fungi and bryophytes, which were also funded by the Friends
- Extension of the Rainforest Gully fogging system
- Application to the Australian Research Council for funds to enable ANBG, in partnership with the ANU and the Friends, to carry out scientific research into Australian plant conservation, specifically seed banking, and how Australian alpine plant species can be expected to respond to predicted climate change. A long-lasting outcome would be an alpine garden in the ANBG to display and interpret the results of the research.
- Production of a booklet and DVD on the gardens for sale through the bookshop

Growing Friends

The main purpose of the Growing Friends is to learn techniques of plant propagation. In the process they produce plants for sale to the public and so raise funds for the Friends. The first plant sale for 2009 was held on 18 April.

Guides

Guides continue to conduct 2 guided walks every day, with an additional early morning walk in January and February. During Floriade in 2008 an extra *Spring Flower* walk was run every day. There are also a number of special booked walks during the year. No other Australian botanic garden provides this level of visitor service.

Photographic Competition:

The 12th Friends' photo competition for ACT and region schools and colleges will be held in 2009 with the winning entries displayed in the Visitor Centre for a period. The Friends regard the photo competition as a way to attract young people to the Gardens and at the same time encourage the development of their artistic skills.

Social Events

An 8-concert season held at the Gardens in January 2009 was highly successful. Audiences were very large, with the greatest being well over 4000 people and many nights over 2000. The net amount raised by the Friends through donations and sales of drinks was over \$14,000. While the financial result is very pleasing, the greatest satisfaction is in attracting such large numbers of people to the Gardens. It is hoped this success with concerts can be repeated in 2010.

Other social activities during 2009 will include Breakfast with the Birds in September and a visit to the Parliament House Gardens, probably also in September and October.

Website

An upgraded website has been established, separate from the ANBG site. The new address is

www.friendsANBG.org.au and the e mail address is now info@friendsANBG.org.au

FRIENDS OF BENDIGO BOTANIC GARDENS

Central Victoria

Throughout 2008 a great deal has been happening with regards to the Bendigo Botanic Gardens at White Hills, yet very little would have been apparent to a casual visitor to the gardens for the first nine months of the year. The year 2008 will be remembered as the year that the restoration of the gardens really started, as that was when the long process to write a Master Plan for the Botanic Gardens began.

The Friends have been involved every step of the way. For the committee members who were closely involved it has been most instructive in how local government and the community interact and the complicated processes that are needed to produce a document that we all can work with. We have become acquainted with issues, stake holders, main players and even major players in the hours spent around the Steering Committee meeting tables.

It has taken all of 2008 to produce an Options Paper. It is a distillation of all our deliberations on the restoration of the Historic Gardens and suggested designs for the new garden extensions. The Options Papers contained a great deal of detail about the history of the gardens and three possible plans for the new gardens. It was released in early February, with a deal of media fanfare, for public comment. To further stimulate debate and to find out community ideas for the future of the gardens the City of Greater Bendigo Planning Department staff and the Friends have visited shopping malls, local schools and the Botanic Gardens on busy weekends to meet as many people as possible. There were articles in the local papers and of course the Options Paper could be accessed on the City Council website.

What have we learned form all this?

Well, it is still not clear that the wider community really understands that the City of Greater Bendigo is proposing to build a large regional botanic garden that will be comparable with the great botanic gardens at Geelong and Ballarat. It has been difficult to explain this new Botanic Garden concept to people who have no memory of the gardens when it was a 'Botanic' Garden' over 100 years ago.

When we asked people how they would like to see the Botanic Gardens restored many gave answers that were, in effect, more of what they have now. If they used the gardens to walk their dog they wanted more pathways, if they used the gardens for picnics they wanted more picnic furniture.

Throughout the course of this process we have spent hours debating 'issues' such as the title of this project "The Bendigo Botanic Gardens at White Hills" for example. This is an issue that has created an impassioned response from some locals. The title sounds reasonable enough, however today, most people think of the Botanic Gardens as simply the 'White Hills Gardens' and many are affronted by the idea that White Hills is relegated to second place in the title.

We have learnt to keep our eyes on the main prize and not allow ourselves to be distracted by such and to repeat like a mantra;

- A Botanic Garden is a place for learning about the living world (as well as for recreation)
- A Botanic Garden is a place to observe and appreciate the beauty of plants (as well as for recreation).
- A Botanic Garden is a garden for all the community to visit every day of the year for all of their lives.

We have received unwavering support from the City of Greater Bendigo Councillors and Parks and Planning Department Staff throughout and it is because of this we are confident that there will be a Master Plan for the Bendigo Botanic Gardens in our hands by the end of 2009.

Jan Orr
Secretary

AUSTRALIAN INLAND BOTANIC GARDENS MILDURA- WENTWORTH

Wimmera & Mallee, Victoria

Australian Inland Botanic Gardens Mildura – Wentworth

Hosting the Association of Friends of Botanic Gardens Conference 22nd -23rd May 2010
With the New Year came the very exciting, long awaited appointment of an Administration / Education Officer at the AIBG.

Wendy Hallinan, an experienced and highly skilled educator now works part time at the Gardens, relieving the Gardens Supervisor (head gardener) of numerous administrative tasks. Her duties are extensive, providing support for the Staff, the Committee of Management and Friends of the Gardens. Having previously worked as a lecturer/teacher of horticulture to Gardens apprentices at the Sunraysia Institute of Technical and Further Education (Mildura) and also as a volunteer, Wendy was already well known and respected by those of the Gardens community with whom she had come in contact. We are so fortunate to have her professional services.

At the end of March we farewell the final GreenCorps team. Greening Australia will no longer have Federal Government funding to continue employment and training of young Australians in partnership with organizations whose work is substantially in the natural environment. Our Gardens were awarded two teams of ten young people in succession, each team for six months with a qualified team leader. Although some of their work and experience was with other organizations, most was at our Gardens where all partners gained a great deal. Collecting cuttings, propagating and planting creeping boobialla, *Myoporum parvifolium* and round leafed pigface, *Disphyma clavellatum*, designing and preparing a garden bed for 'sclerophyll' plants, mulching, assessment of degradation followed by reclamation of eroded high river bank, identification of plants and sites used by past aboriginal inhabitants and moving an historic building, were among the challenges put to these young people.

Last year, a donation was made to the Gardens of a second historic pine log sheep station homestead with similar construction to the existing visitor centre. Volunteers dismantled the "Peaka" house, over a hundred kilometres northeast of Mildura and stored the materials. This now provides impetus for planning to proceed on a kitchen annexe to the Magenta building that is hired out for functions including wedding receptions. The nineteenth century theme for the visitor complex continues.

Recently acquired new chairs and audiovisual equipment with screen add to the Gardens facilities.

Here's hoping for wetter weather to freshen up our Gardens in time for the 2010 Conference! Our area remains in drought but the Gardens staff are working hard to maintain healthy displays throughout all the beds whilst thoughtfully applying drip irrigation from an adequate water allocation pumped from the Murray River.

Jenny Eagle
Secretary, Friends of the AIBG

FRIENDS OF THE ROYAL BOTANIC GARDENS MELBOURNE Melbourne City, Victoria

Many plants in the Melbourne Gardens were scorched in the February heat, but most are expected to recover. The main concerns continue to be the condition of the Ornamental Lake and the impacts of the very low rainfall on the plant collections. The lake is at its lowest-ever level, with just a dry sandy bed in front of the Terrace tearooms. The state-wide 'dry' has brought in some birds not usually seen such as an Azure Kingfisher, but overall numbers of swans, coots and moorhens have fallen. The Working Wetlands project, devised to capture storm water run-off from nearby streets and provide long-term replenishment for the lake has attracted very generous funding of \$1 million from The Myer Foundation. A further \$1.9 million is now being sought to enable the plan to be put into effect.

Dame Elisabeth Murdoch, much-admired Patron of the Gardens, planted a rare Brazilian Pine *Araucaria angustifolia* on Western Lawn to mark her 100th birthday. The RBG Board honoured Dame Elisabeth with a small but very special gathering at which, staff, Friends and all the groups associated with the Gardens were represented.

On 25 February at Mueller Hall, Dame Elisabeth launched the book *A Lifetime of Gardening* for her friend the Dowager Marchioness of Salisbury. Then followed an outstanding illustrated lecture by this diminutive 87-year-old author. A rapt audience learned of her restoration or creation of gardens in Great Britain, France, Italy and the United States, often requiring detailed research into 15th and 16th century architecture and history; a full house and a memorable event for the Friends.

At the Friends annual meeting, 25-year Volunteer Service Medals were awarded to Lydia Bartlett and Pauline Morrison. In addition, three 20-year and three 15-year medals were presented. Friends scholarships for RBG staff were also announced. Helen Jolley from the Herbarium will visit the University of Murcia in Spain to further her research on the Pottiaceae family of mosses. Herbarium curator Wayne Gebert, whose work includes translating labels and published information on old collections, will continue his Latin studies, and horticultural technician Philip Bowyer-Smith will study computer-aided design of irrigation systems.

Matt Jones, RBG's Tourism and Marketing Co-ordinator, has been awarded a fellowship by Tourism Alliance Victoria. He will investigate nature-based tourism in USA and Canada, as well as promoting the RBG and regional botanic gardens to the US market.

In the last financial year, 1,645,303 people visited the Gardens, according to the official count. Anecdotal evidence points to an increase in the number of Chinese-speaking independent visitors (as distinct from the many busloads making cursory stops). The RBG's Co-ordinator, Volunteers is initiating a survey to ascertain the most effective way to present information to these visitors. A Chinese-national volunteer is helping the Guides with this project.

The Friends Botanical Illustrators staged their ninth biennial exhibition in November, showing the impressive work of 82 artists. Celia Rosser Medals were awarded to Jenny Phillips, Sandra Sanger and Jennifer Wilkinson. The Friends presented four paintings to the State Botanical Collection, with a fifth work purchased by the RBG. The total of 69 sales, fewer than previously, resulted in an interim profit of \$38,000. Unfortunately, news of the economic slowdown was gaining momentum during the exhibition.

Belt-tightening and summer weather extremes also affected attendances at live outdoor theatre performances in the Gardens. However, 'numbers were up a lot' for Moonlight Cinema. The screening of 'Hotel for Dogs' was a howling success. At least 400 dogs on leads swelled the 1500-strong human audience. When darkness fell and the sound system was turned on, the startled canines barked for about five minutes, then amazingly behaved in exemplary fashion during the film – a tribute to their good training by engaged owners. If an appropriate movie can be secured, dogs will be invited again next summer.

IN BRIEF

- Growing Friends autumn plant sale 2 and 3 May
- Look out for *Sustainable Gardens* by respected RBG horticultural botanists Rob Cross and Roger Spencer. CSIRO Publishing

- RBG and Cranbourne Friends will jointly present a lecture on the Australian Research Centre for Urban Ecology and a talk by Dr Philip Moors on The Role of Botanic Gardens Around the World. Sunday 14 June
- For details of a November tour of Natural Landscapes and Gardens of New Zealand, arranged by the Friends and Australians Studying Abroad, phone 1800 645 755

Heather Ironmonger

VOLUNTEER GUIDES MAROOCHY REGIONAL BUSHLAND BOTANIC GARDENS Sunshine Coast, Queensland

Volunteers began planting and creating pathways at our beautiful Botanic Gardens at Tanawha on the Sunshine Coast in Queensland in 2001. For three years before this, these same volunteers were faced with the onerous task of removing weeds from the re-growth forest covering the 82 hectares.

Members of the public were interested in what was happening, so that at the official opening at the end of 2001, the car parks were overflowing. Naturally a conducted wander took place at this event. Many small interested groups asked to be shown round the Gardens at other times. This task was usually undertaken by one of the busy volunteers. It wasn't until midway through 2006 that we had trained guides to conduct walks.

I had been a volunteer guide at the Brisbane City Botanic Gardens for twelve years before retiring to the Coast and suggested that the Gardens had reached the stage where guided tours for the public were needed. With the wonderful help of the Brisbane Botanic Gardens, our initial three trainee guides joined some of their training sessions and further training took place at Maroochy Gardens. Happily since then another Brisbane guide has joined us, so 'we few, we happy few' conduct guided walks for groups, and an hourly walk every Friday for casual visitors.

We advertise our walks in the community pages of the local papers and on radio. It seems though that the best advertising is word of mouth. Photos in papers are always a great attention-grabber.

Our booked walks have proved successful. Groups, usually of retirees, come for a cuppa or lunch, then enjoy a gentle stroll with us. We have even had busloads of tour groups from Victoria, which was a triumph over distance! I have found that talking to bus drivers who bring tour groups to the Gardens for the compulsory morning tea and toilet stop can result in a booked walk from their tour companies. Most booked walks however originate from such groups as Probus, Rotary and Garden Clubs.

Most casual visitors come to the Gardens to enjoy the ambience and a ramble by themselves. To interest more visitors in joining our Friday walks, we decided to offer themed walks on the first Friday of each month as well as general walks on other Fridays.

Our first themed walk was a Fern Walk – an outstanding success with 41 visitors. If this interest grows, we will need to take bookings!

We continue to add to our knowledge base from people with special knowledge of plants – a local Aboriginal woman, ASGAP groups and other plant lovers - as well as from books written on local flora.

It could be said of Garden Guides everywhere that ‘a little learning is a wondrous thing’, as it inevitably leads on to further learning!

*Margaret Mungomery,
Coordinator Volunteer Guides*

FRIENDS OF NORTH COAST REGIONAL BOTANIC GARDEN.

Coffs Harbour NSW

In September 2008 the Friends celebrated 20 years since the opening of the Botanic Garden in Coffs Harbour. In honour of one of the founders of the Garden, Alex Floyd, a beautiful quilt depicting the species containing the name *floydii* was created by Friend, Lesley Wickham. A work of Art and also a work of ‘heart’, the quilt will hang in pride of place in the newly renovated Information office at the Garden entrance. Our new souvenir booklet entitled “The Greenest Bend in the River” was also launched at the celebratory cocktail party and is now on sale.

2008 was a very busy year for the Garden and the Friends. Several events were staged in the Pavilion surrounds at the entrance to the Garden. These included:

The Botanical Jazz series in the first 4 weeks of February, one of our major fundraising events for the year and although there were weather concerns the attendance was good.

Harmony Day in March, a new multicultural event with singers, dancers, drummers and food stalls representing some of the many ethnic groups who live in this district. Over 2000 people visited the Gardens that day.

Children’s Day in May was a huge success. Our beautiful Koinobori kites flew over the lake and there were plenty of children’s activities and good food. We go on to even “bigger and better” things this May!

In September our first “Art in the Garden” exhibition and sale afforded an opportunity for local artists to display art with a botanical theme. Several schools also participated, with prizes for best works.

“Botanica” in October has proved to be an outstanding event over the years. This year we joined forces with the Council and Department of the Environment to stress the theme of “Green Living”. Renewable energy sources, waterwise groups and organic food producers were invited and almost 2000 visitors attended to learn more about building a veggie patch, creating a waterwise garden, mulching and getting rid of weeds and pests.

All these events bring visitors to the Garden and engender an interest in plants, rainforests and biodiversity. The guides and education officer also invite school groups into the

Garden to stimulate children's interest from an early age. Although we don't have a children's garden as such, we have a turf maze, informational clapper boards and signs and a new analemmatic sundial – all of which are highly popular with youngsters. This year we host the 3rd. AusBiota project for High School students in the region.

Also this year we celebrate the building of our new Japanese section. Not just an area for plants indigenous to Japan, this section is being built in the traditions and culture of Japan. Delegates from our sister city of Sasebo have come here as teachers and given advice on design. We are now “experts” on rock placement!

With only 4 paid Council staff, we are very fortunate to have a creative curator of the Garden who enlists help for projects from Work for the Dole and TAFE. The Friends have 3 times weekly working bees, run the Herbarium and Seed Bank, the shop and plant sales and raise funds with Garden events. We bring out a quarterly newsletter and have just opened our website at www.coffsbotanicgarden.com.au. We are certainly a “hands-on” group of volunteers!

Contact us on coffsbotanic@gmail.com or call (02) 66484188

Eve Colley, Events co-ordinator and publicity officer.

FRIENDS OF ORANGE BOTANIC GARDENS

Central West, NSW

On Sunday 26th October last year we celebrated the 20th anniversary of the official opening of the Orange Botanic Gardens.

The Friends organised an afternoon of activities to showcase progress over the past 10 years (since our last celebration) and to honour those who have contributed to the Gardens' development. The program began with a walk around the Gardens to view the latest developments including an introduction to the re-organised heritage rose garden and viewing of newly installed sculptures. This included a presentation to Orange City Council of Ian Marr's sculpture 'Two Roads' which is a joint donation from FOBG and the sculptor. This work is a large curved piece of Mintaro slate inscribed with words from Robert Frost's poem 'Road not Taken'. Then 20 trees were planted in the new native conifer section by people who have played a significant role in the development of the Gardens. The trees were donated by the Friends with a small contribution from the Molong Garden Club. The activities culminated in High Tea at the Clover Hill Centre. This was prepared and elegantly presented by our catering Friends.



Planting at the 20th Anniversary celebration

The seventh series of Music in the Gardens was held in February/March. This is a joint venture between the Friends and the Orange Regional Conservatorium and has become a

well-established and popular event on Orange's cultural and social calendar. For four of the five scheduled concerts we were blessed with good weather, just perfect for an early evening picnic in the Gardens. At one of the concerts all proceeds were donated to the Rotary Victorian Bushfire Appeal.



Other regular events included a winter lecture/luncheon at which the speaker was one of our members who had just spent a year restoring the Norman potager garden of a chateau near Rouen, France. Our pre-Christmas 'Happy Hour' provided another opportunity for Friends to mingle socially.

Music in the Gardens

The Wednesday Volunteers spent many months preparing a plant stall for a local Open Garden. The owners had kindly allowed us to use plant material, mostly indigenous, from their garden for propagation purposes. This resulted in a collection of interesting healthy plants which sold well and produced funds for use in our Gardens.

We are delighted that one of our members, Neil Jones, who is also President of ECCO (Environmentally Concerned Citizens of Orange), has been elected to Orange City Council and will be chairing the Orange Botanic Gardens Community Committee. Neil is a great supporter of the Gardens and a staunch defender of its integrity in the recent battles over the use of adjacent land.

Patricia Bannatyne

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

President: Alex Smart
RBG Cranbourne
Vice-President: vacant
Secretary/Treasurer: Annie McGeachy
Public Officer: Annie McGeachy

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Ballarat Elizabeth Gilfillan
Canberra WarwickWright
Warrnambool Amanda King
Benalla Betty Lindsay
Orange Patricia Bannatyne

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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 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

Editor & Printing Annie McGeachy
Format & processing Amanda king.

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

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

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.

2009

May 14-17

International Plant Propagators Ass. Conference

Royal Tasmanian Botanic Gardens, Hobart

Theme: "*Fruitful @ 42*S.*"

May 15

Heritage of the high country forum

Omeo, Victoria

Form Coordinator: Jane Andrews 0409804727

janea@netspace.net.au

May 16

Sue Templeton "Salvias – more than a culinary herb."

Mueller Hall RBG Melbourne

Margi Petzke Email: margi_chris@iprimus.com.au

October 8-11

Aust/NZ .BGANZ Biennial Congress

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

Australian Inland Botanic Garden, Mildura, Victoria

Theme: "*Opening the Gates to Lateral Thinking*"

WEB SITES OF INTEREST

Are Botanic Gardens Fit for Purpose?

A question addressed to the Directors of the four national
botanic gardens of the United Kingdom and Ireland

<http://www.bgci.org/resources/news/0573/>

ANZ Charitable Trusts

It is the sole trustee or co-trustee of approximately 400
charitable trusts, settlements and foundations –Trusts

www.anz.com.au/australia/charitabletrusts/guidelines.asp

The latest **Grants guide** is available

see <http://www.heritage.vic.gov.au/page.asp?ID=417>

BGANZ on line Newsletter. *The Botanic Garden*

www.anbg.gov.au/chabg/newsletter

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Botanic Gardens Committee. Neither the Association Committee nor
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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

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Friends of Kings Park Inc, Volunteer Lodge, Fraser Ave., Kings Park & Botanic Gardens, West Perth, W.A. 6005

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