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Beverley Graham 1994

Campsis

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From the President

THE ASSOCIATION'S 2002 CONFERENCE was held in Ballarat, Buninyong, Daylesford and Castlemaine on the 1st, 2nd and 3rd of November. I am writing this on the 4th, and am delighted to tell you that it was a very happy and successful weekend. There were 120 persons who attended the Conference, 106 on the Friday and the Saturday, 100 at the Conference dinner and 75 who toured the three Botanic Gardens on the Sunday. The scene was set with a beautiful sunny and warm spring Friday evening in Ballarat. Our guides were on hand and took our guests on tours of the Gardens and the Conservatory. The highlight was a special tour of our developing Wetland Area, led by Ian Rossiter, Manager of the Botanical Gardens and Lake Wendouree. Ian explained the reasons behind the development of the area as a Wetland, its design and its planting plans.

The remainder of the evening was spent catching up with Friends met at past Conferences and meeting new Friends. We were particularly pleased to welcome Helen Lister-Reid from Darwin, Alexander (an environmentalist from India, who came with Friends from Albury), and Friends from Portland, the group that joined the Association in the past year. Another came from St Kilda, where a Friends group was recently formed and may soon be a new Member of the Association.

On Saturday we moved to the Lecture Theatre in the Brewery Complex of the University of Ballarat. All the speakers gave us much to think about, as well as entertaining us. Ken Allan, a past Superintendent of the Royal Botanic Gardens, Melbourne, now the General Manager of the Garden of St Erth, spoke on 'The Role of Botanic Gardens in the Community'. The topic of Rod May, Chairman of the Organic Federation of Australia, was 'Global food supply, sustainability and the importance of organic agriculture in satisfying the needs of farmers, consumers and the poor'. Chloe Munro, Secretary, Victorian Government Department of Natural Resources and Environment, spoke about the role of the Department. Michael McCoy, garden designer and writer, told us about 'The shared vision of the designer and the gardener'. Sarah Guest, author of many garden books and journalist for *The Age* for more than 12 years, spoke about 'Modern

Finally, Peter Shepherd, CEO of the School of Forestry, Creswick, and a senior lecturer at the School of Forestry, Melbourne, spoke on 'The Different uses of Botanical Gardens in Australia and Asia'.

On Saturday evening we enjoyed a lovely dinner at Craig's Royal Hotel, where Eugene Kneebone, a semi-retired senior manager with local government, was the speaker. His talk was inspired by a visit to the new Roma Street Parklands in Brisbane, relating life's experiences to a garden.

Sunday was the day when we visited the Buninyong, Wombat Hill (Daylesford) and Castlemaine Botanic Gardens, led by John Hawker, of Heritage Victoria, and Ian Rossiter. They began by telling us of the work being done to restore the Buninyong Gardens. After a very welcome morning tea we moved on to Daylesford, where the sun shone and we had a most informative walk through the Gardens with local Friends. John Hawker's knowledge of the individual trees, when they were planted and where other specimens were to be found, was quite astounding. We are especially grateful to John for making this such a special day.

After lunch on the lawns of Wombat Hill we moved on to Castlemaine, where their Friends were waiting to welcome us. Again, we learned much about their beautiful Botanic Gardens from John and from Annie O'Shannasy, the President of the Castlemaine Friends. Once more, we were given delightful and welcome refreshment. On return to the Robert Clark Centre in the Ballarat Gardens some 40 of the conferees enjoyed a barbecue tea and a tour of the nursery complex. On Monday morning the few visitors still in Ballarat visited Noel Main's fascinating cactus and succulent garden.

As with past Conferences, there was a great deal of planning and many people helping behind the scene, at least 50 from the four Friends groups. Success can only be achieved with such help.

I am particularly grateful to the Friends in Buninyong, Daylesford and Castlemaine, who so willingly joined those in Ballarat to make the Conference so successful, and who entertained those attending the Conference. I also thank the staff at all four Gardens, who gave wonderful support and extra work for this special weekend.

2004. Pauline Wicksteed from Canberra joined the Committee at a meeting on the Friday evening. She will lead those in Canberra preparing for the 2004 Conference.

We should now like to hear your comments on the Ballarat Conference. If it did not cover some areas that concern you, please let us know, as that will help in the planning for 2004.

Sincere good wishes to you all for the Festive Season, and good luck to all our gardens during the present drought.

Joan Garner

Friends of the Ballarat Botanical Gardens

WE HAVE MUCH PLEASURE in reporting the end of an exceptional and, I believe, first national Association of Friends Conference. Co-hosting this event with Buninyong, Castlemaine and Wombat Hill (Daylesford Friends) groups created new challenges and opportunities. Joan Garner's report is much more detailed. Suffice it to say that the combined efforts of our many hard and happy workers made for a most successful and busy programme of presentations and, of course, socialising and networking.

Our own Ballarat Gardens fairly gleamed and it was a real treat to be introduced for the first time to the Gardens of our co-hosts through John Hawker's excellent and informative tour.

On a more day-to-day basis, we can report that the trial for the vandalism to our Stoddart collection has been completed. Two youths have been given a custodial sentence and a substantial financial penalty.

The future home for the collection of statues is still to be determined (more news in a future *Campsis*). However, it is projected that the complete collection of 12 statues will be on display to the public as a complete collection for the first time since 1993 by next year's Begonia Festival. Yet another reason to hie back to Ballarat.

**Lorraine Powell
President**

Friends of the Castlemaine Botanic Gardens

WE HAVE HAD MEETINGS with the Shire and their Heritage Adviser, trying to ascertain what is the best course of action to implement a Heritage Study, to possibly revamp the present modern eyesore of a barbecue shelter or to reconstruct the previous shelter, and also how to implement a Study before making grant applications to restore the former tea rooms. So far we have met only mild interest. The tea rooms are in desperate need of repair, but we need to have community support for

not available for works in the Gardens, and this is not helpful when applying for dollar grants.

Having received a small grant from the Shire Council we are now in the process of placing a new interpretative sign at the old nursery site.

Kevin Walsh has completed the initial work of the Rose Garden redevelopment. The original planting map shows that the roses were planted in alphabetical order! We are awaiting the spring season to positively identify the present plantings before moving on to plans for the redevelopment.

The 2002 Conference has been a major undertaking for our small group this year. We continue to lead tours for interested parties, including school groups and other Friends.

**Trish Addis
Secretary**

Friends of the Wombat Hill Botanic Gardens

WE WERE PARTICULARLY GLAD to welcome those attending the 2002 Conference to our Gardens on Sunday 3 November. The Gardens were especially lovely with rhododendrons and camellias in full bloom. Some of the beds for annuals were planted in the following week.

Our group has been given permanent space at the Tourist Information Centre and will have a display there, changing with the seasons.

The last Taylor and Sangster Lecture for 2002 has been held. They have not been as well attended as in the past, but excellent presentations have been made by the speakers. We are grateful to Val Pyers, our Past President, for his excellent organisation.

We are pleased to have begun more hands-on activity in the Gardens, with weeding and caring for an allotted bed, which we hope to be able to restore to its former glory.

We still await confirmation of Heritage Status for the Gardens.

Shirley Falkinder

Friends of the Australian National Botanic Gardens, Canberra

THE FRIENDS OF THE ANBG have had a busy year so far, with a variety of activities, including a successful visit to Bundanoon, walks and talks, and a floral art exhibition. Most recently, the Friends-sponsored Annual Gardens Photographic Competition for High School and College students was held, with prizes totalling \$2700 being awarded. The judges commented on the very high standard of the photographs.

The Gardens staff and some existing Guides took part in the training of a new intake of Volunteer Guides, bringing the total number of Guides to around sixty. Guides continue to lead walks twice daily, increasing to three times daily in the summer months, in addition to booked walks for various tour

The growing Friends held a successful plant sale in April and will hold a Mini Sale on 23 November, from 9 a.m. to 1.30 p.m. They continue to meet monthly for propagation of plants and for talks on particular species of plants.

In support of the Gardens, the Friends have again allocated \$20,000 this year for selected projects within the Gardens. We again provided book vouchers for the Intern students. In addition we have sponsored the attendance of a delegate from Papua New Guinea at the International Congress on Education in Botanic Gardens, held in Sydney in September. The extension of the Rock Garden was publicly launched by Jenny Churchill.

At a cocktail party held in her honour, the Friends' Council and the Guides farewellled Anne Joyce, the Friends Liaison Officer of the Gardens, who retired after many years' service. She was presented with a gift and life membership of the Friends in recognition of her involvement with the Guides and the Friends organisation since its inception.

The Friends recently approved alterations to the Constitution to enable it to apply to become an 'Environmental Organisation'. If successful, the Friends will be able to set up a Public Fund which can receive tax-deductible donations for the environmental purposes specified in the revised 'objects'. The Friends have been endorsed as an Income Tax Exempt Charity and will apply to become a Deductible Gift Recipient.

We are pleased to report that the ANBG has won two major awards this year: the ACT Adult Learners Week Award for the Volunteer Guide Training Program and the 2002 ACT and Region Tourism Award in the Ecotourism category.

Coming events include our annual Grazing in the Gardens on Saturday 30 November, from 6 to 9 p.m. This is a very popular progressive dinner, held in three locations in the Gardens, with music. Bookings are essential. During each weekend in January and February the Gardens will again host the Saturday Twilight Jazz and the Sunday Serenade Concerts, for which the Friends provide sponsorship and which attract large audiences.

Margaret Mansfield

Friends of the Botanic Gardens of Adelaide

HECTIC, TO SAY THE LEAST was the phrase used by Janie Smylie when asked about Friends' activities at the Botanic Gardens of Adelaide during this year. And, as Vice-President of the Friends and, until recently, Guide Booking Officer, Janie should know.

The year 2002 has seen changes to the Friends' Committee with the resignation of some long-serving Committee and sub-group members, including John Bruce, our valued Treasurer for 17 years, a resignation that was especially reluctantly received. All vacant positions were filled, with five new members of the FBGA Committee including

Director of the Botanic Gardens of Adelaide, is an *ex officio* member and has attended meetings in this capacity. He spoke at a General Meeting during the year, explaining the philosophy behind his plans for new directions for the Gardens. An initiative that has involved the FBGA is a three-year strategic plan for the direction of the BGA, with comments invited and submitted from the Friends Committee.

Another BGA activity in which the Friends took part was the *Growing Together* seminar held in October, with interstate and overseas speakers and presentations by the Hills and Plains staff and the Friends. Regular Management/Friends' Committee meetings have been held throughout the year and are chaired by the Director. These meetings supplement regular meetings held with the Hills, Plains and Marketing managers.

A challenge that has been met is the reorganisation of North Lodge, when the Craft Group combined with the North Lodge and then the Growing Group retail activities. Plants are sold each day outside North Lodge, with major weekend sales in spring and autumn that are allied with craft exhibitions inside the building. With its nursery at Mount Lofty Botanic Garden and regular sales in Adelaide, the Growing Group continues to attract members to the Friends and increasing funds for FBGA donations to the Gardens. With increasing emphasis on occupational health and safety good practices training days are planned for the Shop volunteers and *in situ* training continues for new recruits to the Growing Group. A talk on collections documentation and BGA databases, given by Dr Kerry Walter, Edinburgh Botanic Garden, was attended by FBGA Committee members, the information fitting well with the activities of our Growing and Computer Support Groups.

Recent gifts to the Gardens have included interpretative signs at Wittunga and in the Species Rose Garden at MLBG. Some plant collections have also been supplemented, and part of the annual donation to the Herbarium Library was used to acquire the final volume of Celia Rosser's *The Banksias*. The Friends' 25th Anniversary gift to the Gardens is to be a contribution towards a *History of the Botanic Gardens of Adelaide*, to be funded in partnership with the Board, with completion for the Gardens' sesquicentenary in 2005. As well, an annual award for horticultural staff has been allocated with funds from a bequest to the Friends.

For the Guides the preparation and distribution of self-guided trails for the three gardens continues, and these are popular with visitors. Recently, several Guides took part in the David Jones Flower Festival, giving talks on aspects of garden guiding and on the floral displays, as well as providing a pamphlet with information about the flora. This year, under the guidance of the BGA Education Officer, the Guides combined with Greening Australia for World Environment Day, and at the recent Adelaide Rose Festival the Guides combined with the Growing Group and Bookshop with a sales marquee and activities display. During the Rose Festival we were able to arrange a talk and morning tea for Friends and horticultural staff, our speaker

information and membership and guided walks, have now been received, but too late for the Rose Festival. However, they will be available for our 25th Anniversary celebrations that are to be held from 8 to 12 December and will include a celebration of the 25th anniversary of the opening of Mount Lofty Botanic Garden to the public. We are particularly pleased to have received congratulations and best wishes from Geelong Botanic Gardens.

Tommie Siekmann
President

Friends of Bendigo's Botanic Gardens

THE FRIENDS HAVE DISCOVERED during 2002 that, where we have a very new Friends group working with a very old network of gardens, the way ahead can be rather complicated. This year has taken us along some unexpected paths. Our attempts to produce brochures that would highlight features and plants of Rosalind Park and White Hills Botanic Gardens have become tangled up with a set of complex problems concerning the main-tenance and management of these parks.

The City of Greater Bendigo, in response, has established a Parks Advisory Committee, with representatives from the different administrative departments that are concerned with the gardens. The Friends also have two representatives on this committee. The purpose of the committee is to consider and make recommendations about the master planning, development, maintenance and management of parks and gardens in the City of Greater Bendigo. However, the primary focus will be on Rosalind Park, Lake Weeroona and White Hills Botanic Gardens.

The Committee has endorsed a recommendation from the Parks staff that a Friends Perennial Garden be established in the White Hills Botanic Gardens, and also that the Canna Collection be restored. We are still at the initial planning stage, but these projects will be developed in 2003.

The Propagation Group has been involved in re-potting the cannas that are housed at the City Nursery. Its members have also assisted Parks staff in caring for the roses in the Conservatory Gardens.

In May we held a Mothers' Day event in the Conservatory Gardens, where we combined with the Bendigo Chrysanthemum Club, whose members gave us a talk on the history and cultivation of chrysanthemums in Bendigo. Jane Cleary then took us on a walk around the Conservatory Gardens, explaining the significant historic features of this small central garden.

Some of our members are interested in the local bushland flora. In July we conducted a walk through the Fryerstown Bushland Reserve and in October we travelled north to the Terrick Terrick National Park. The severe drought has had an adverse effect on this year's wildflowers but, even so, there were still some flowers to be seen, proving just how well adapted our local plants really are.

Our membership although small has remained

confident that this will grow when the issues before the Parks Advisory Committee are resolved and the work of the Friends group gains recognition in the wider community.

Jan Orr
President

Friends of Burnley Gardens

OUR PROGRAMME OF MONTHLY meetings and regular working bees has continued. Glen Terry from Greening Australia spoke about revegetation strategies along the Yarra Corridor. Dr Greg Moore, Burnley College Principal, brought us up to date on the Institute's position within the University of Melbourne in terms of management and academic developments. At our October meeting Jan White was inspirational when she told us of her cathartic experience of growing beautiful peonies in the Kerry valley.

A large group of Friends attended a fund-raising film night at the Rivoli Cinema for 'Greenfingers'.

A planting ceremony will take place at our Annual General Meeting on 16 November. *Camellia* 'Alex Jessep' and *Camellia* 'Dorothy Jessep' have been grown in the nursery at the Royal Botanic Gardens and are to be transferred to the *Camellia* bed at Burnley Gardens near the site of the original Principal's residence. Mr Jessep was College Principal from 1927 to 1942.

Guided tours led by trained volunteers from the Friends group have been successful this year and we look forward to extending this activity to help in promoting knowledge of the Burnley Gardens in the wider community.

Money raised during the year has been used to purchase a new plant-labelling system so that members will be able to help more efficiently with this important task. A contribution has also been made towards the cost of replacing a 70-year-old pergola near the *Quercus suber* (Cork Oak).

A Strategy Planning Committee has been meeting during the year to establish further goals and objectives for our group and we look forward to continued growth in membership and interest in our historic Gardens and their future.

Kay Hirst
President

Friends of the Royal Botanic Gardens, Cranbourne

THE BIG, EXCITING NEWS for the Cranbourne Gardens is that money has been made available to enable plans for the Australian Garden to proceed. \$9.5 million – \$7.4 million from the Government and \$2.1 million being committed from the Colonial Foundation. The Exhibition Garden, Sand Garden, Rockpool Waterway, and extensive Eucalypt Walk and the Visitor Centre will complete

Australian Garden project. This section should be finished by 2005.

The Friends have had a busy year. The Growing Friends have been potting up thousands of native plants for orders received. The Winter Lecture Series was again a great success. Held on three Sundays in different locations, with excellent speakers, lunch and afternoon tea, these lectures have grown in popularity.

The Press Gang have been very busy collecting specimens from the Gardens and preparing them for herbaria collections. Eventually there will be three complete sets – two for the Cranbourne Gardens (one a working set) and one for the Melbourne Gardens.

The Annual Dinner was fortunate to have David Tatnall, the renowned photographer, as its speaker. His slides of various parts of Australia were superb. Next year's speaker at the Annual Dinner is to be Dr Steve Hopper, C.E.O. of Perth's King's Park. This will be on Saturday, 3 May 2003.

The recent 'BookFest' was extremely successful. About 200 cartons of books were donated. Of these, approximately 750 publications worth many thousands of dollars are now to go to the Cranbourne Gardens library. A few other publications have gone to the Melbourne Herbarium library and some to ARCUE. The remaining books were either sold or donated to appropriate organisations.

There has been a very successful weekend camp at the Grampians. There have also been Night Prowls, weed-pulling efforts, bird walks and an insect walk through the Gardens with an entomologist.

The year usually ends with a barbecue at Stringybark picnic area, with a jazz band. It was very nice having a visit from the Ballarat Friends during the year, as well as the Voluntary Guides from Melbourne.

Lesley Clark

Friends of Geelong Botanic Gardens

ON 6 SEPTEMBER THE GOVERNOR OF Victoria, John Landy, officially opened the 21st Century Garden extensions of the Geelong Botanic Gardens. The opening marked the culmination of years of effort, particularly by the Friends, to implement the first stage of the Gardens' Master-plan, which dates back to 1994, when the Friends initiated a comprehensive study of the Geelong Botanic Gardens and the surrounding Eastern Park.

Before the official opening the Friends assisted with four Sunday previews of the new Garden, which were held for Friends, garden clubs, environmental groups, horticultural media, education personnel and tourist operators. Since the opening of the Garden for the 21st Century visitor numbers have increased dramatically, and the Friends, who provide practically all the visitor services, have been rushed off their feet. We have had to increase staff in the Teahouse, and the Voluntary Guides are taking booked walks almost every day.

Garden to the waterfront. The entrance driveway is strongly planted with flora of the region. The Garden, which is reached by grand steps, is planted with indigenous plants from the Geelong region, drought-tolerant plants from South Africa, South America, the Canary Islands and Central Australia, as well as ancient plants that depict evolution. The new Garden also enhances the entrance to our significant historic Gardens.

On Sunday 8 September a young *Sequoia-dendron giganteum* was planted in the original 1850s garden by The Venerable Geshe Sonam, a Buddhist monk, as a symbol of peace. The tree was blessed by the Dalai Lama on his visit in May. Our other giant sequoia was planted in 1873.

The Friends were successful during the year in securing a grant from Parks Victoria to assist with the conservation of the 1860s pit glasshouse in the nursery area of the Gardens. The conservatory will be conserved for the display of information panels about early curatorial history.

The Friends' Teahouse has just celebrated its tenth birthday. We have staffed the Teahouse with Friends on every day (except Christmas Day and Good Friday) since it was opened. The Teahouse has made a considerable amount of money for the Friends and the Gardens and we shall all celebrate its success at the Friends' Christmas party on Wednesday 4 December.

Our pre-Christmas weekend plant sale will take place on 7 and 8 December. The plants look magnificent and are certainly priced more reasonably than those you buy in a commercial nursery. Many of the visitors to the Gardens take advantage of the nursery being open to the public every Wednesday morning.

Congratulations to the Friends of Ballarat, Buninyong, Wombat Hill and Castlemaine for an excellent Association Conference last weekend. Congratulations also to the Friends of the Botanic Gardens of Adelaide, who are celebrating their 25th Anniversary this month.

Jayne Salmon, President

Friends of the Royal Tasmanian Botanical Gardens

THE WEATHER HAS BEEN as unpredictable as spring usually is in Hobart: bracing, gusting winds one day and serene sunshine the next, with sprinkling rain a sure bet for any time of day. The result? A beautiful, lush, colourful, joyful and bud-bursting scene in gardens and in the bush.

With the spring the Friends of RTBG have also burst into life again after a lazy winter. We began in August with a huge sale of Cacti, the remnants of a gift to the Gardens of a private collection after certain of the specimens had been kept aside by the Gardens. Even though it was a unique opportunity for the public to buy otherwise unavailable specimens we were amazed at the number of knowledgeable purchasers. Many a trailer went off happily laden with large unwieldy specimens with

hand. At this weekend sale we discovered two Friends, a husband and wife team of amateur sausage sizzlers who are guaranteed to be called upon at all our future functions, so expert were they! All in all we made more than \$3000 and enjoyed the experience to boot.

These funds and more from the kitty were given immediately to the Gardens to purchase seats for the new access path, which has a more gradual gradient leading into the Gardens than those of the hitherto options of wide steps or steepish path.

Also new is the renovation to the Conservatory southern entrance, allowing visitors to pass through the building from end to end while admiring the breathtaking floral displays it holds on a regular basis. A few years ago the Friends provided funds to keep the Conservatory open and the displays going when the Gardens did not have the necessary funds.

The last weekend in September was the Tulip Festival: a gala occasion for the Gardens when the public turns up in droves to see the display of tulips and to enjoy spring in the Gardens while participating in the fun of the fair. Friends collect the entrance fees and generally make themselves useful. It requires an all-out effort from the members to supply the necessary volunteers. As always, it was a resounding success. While the Tulip Festival was in full swing in Hobart, so was the Gardening Australia Live show in Sydney. The RTBG stand there took out the silver medal for their display. Altogether a most satisfactory couple of days.

The Gardens now form part of the new Department of Tourism, Parks, Heritage and the Arts, and Steve Corbett, our new Director, views this as 'an exciting move to a department with a cultural heritage and tourism focus'. The future of the Gardens is being determined by reference to a Strategic Plan that is identifying the key issues to be addressed in the future planning of the Gardens. The Friends are taking part in this process. This is only part of the present stocktaking process, as there is research going into Strategic Conservation and Asset management and to researching significant trees. As a start, more environment-friendly green-waste recycling measures have already been implemented.

The major impact so far is the refurbishment of the Discovery Centre and the planned series of changes to the displays there. The most recent is a fascinating display of carnivorous plants. At the opening our fast becoming famous sausage sizzlers provided sustenance for visitors.

In addition to being involved in the above activities, Friends are still taking guided tours, growing plants for sale, helping in the Discovery Centre and supervising the photographic gallery in the Friends' Cottage. It looks like being another busy season.

Our Christmas party will be on 23 November and, weather willing, will be a barbecue. Funny, that!

Betty Charles, Editor of *Fagus*

Friends of the Royal Botanic Gardens,

THE FRIENDS' MAJOR SPRING ACTIVITIES – the Growing Friends' Plant Sale and The Art of Botanical Illustration exhibition – were a winning double, paying dividends for the huge effort involved. Takings at the sale amounted to \$25,375 – an excellent result given that there was considerably less stock than last year. The financial outcome of the exhibition is not yet known, but its high artistic standard attracted much admiration. It featured almost 150 paintings and drawings by 70 artists from across Australia. An illustrated version of the catalogue was presented on the Royal Botanic Gardens' website (www.rbg.vic.gov.au/Friends) for the first time. The catalogue is also available on CD Rom from the Friends' office, at a cost of \$10.00.

A highlight of the opening reception was the presentation of the Celia Rosser medals, inaugurated to reflect Celia's contribution to the status of botanical illustration, which combines creativity with scientific accuracy. Those honoured for their excellence were Anita Barley, Dianne Emery and Mali Moir.

A donation of \$3000 from the Friends enabled works by Mali Moir and Pam Habersberger to be acquired for the State Botanical Collection, while the RBG and the Director's Circle funded purchases of work by Merle McIntyre, Alison Gianangeli and Anita Barley for the collection.

On a more modest scale, the Botanical Illustrators held a sale in July of affordable small, unframed works, together with Rebecca Trinca's botanically-inspired china.

The Friends have produced a Christmas card featuring *Cedrus libani*, painted by Botanical Illustrator Dolores Skowronski-Malloni. Also looking ahead to the festive season, new RBG Board member Elaine Canty will be guest speaker at the Friends' Christmas dinner at the Lyceum Club on 12 December.

For some time the Friends have wished to have a major longer-term fund-raising project, and in June we launched 'Water Works, Water Wise'. With approximately two hectares of the Gardens remaining to be incorporated into the Automatic Irrigation System, we have accepted the Director's suggestion to support its extension to Theatre Lawn, to cost \$47,000 over two years. Besides its local application, this extension will continue to improve the conservation of water across the whole RBG system. (Not only has the system freed staff from having to move hoses; its efficient operation has reduced Gardens' water consumption by 42 per cent since 1994-95.)

At our annual meeting on 11 November, we welcomed a new President – Irwin Newman – succeeding Sir Ninian Stephen, and Maurice Castro, who takes over as Treasurer from David Baumgartner. Colin Herbert is the new convener of the Growing Friends and Meg Miller leads a team that has assumed responsibility for *Botanic News*.

Membership recorded at 30 June was 1640, up 11 per cent on the previous year, and our numbers con

pointing number who fail to renew. Membership subscriptions for 2002-03 were increased for the first time in three years.

We have closed the Friends website to become part of a newly-designed RBG site, and are grateful for this opportunity to achieve wider coverage; you'll find us on www.rbg.vic.gov.au/Friends.

More than eight years ago the Friends introduced a program by which people may have seats placed in the Gardens by means of a donation to our Trust Fund. As the number of seats grew to 83, management of the scheme outstripped the resources of the Friends and has now been handed over to the RBG Development Branch.

We are indebted to RBG staff for their continued readiness to contribute to our activities. Nursery staff conducted a very successful propagation course in August, while others have led 'insiders' walks in the Gardens and Herbarium and scientists have spoken on the nature of their research.

About 60 new Friends were welcomed at an orientation morning in October. Emphasis was placed, both with slides and during the subsequent walk led by the Voluntary Guides, on showing how the Friends have assisted the Gardens.

Activities between May and October – such as talks, walks and visits – have made a profit of \$12,000, topped by wonderful talks by Peter Valder and John Patrick which each raised \$1500. We were honoured that Celia Rosser conducted groups of Friends around the exhibition of her *Banksia* paintings at the State Library in June, combined with an interesting tour of the library. Bruce Fuhrer, Dr Greg Moore and Michele Adler were also much-appreciated contributors to our speakers program. A new venture – a screening and sale of videos from the UK – proved successful. A spring tour of Dandenongs gardens was, as ever, popular and inspiring. Unfortunately we had to cancel a planned summer visit to Mornington Peninsula gardens, due to problems posed by public liability insurance. We are following with interest the outcome of legislation which may ease this burden for non-profit organisations such as ours.

Severe windstorms in early September caused significant damage in the Gardens and a number of mature trees had to be removed. However, the ill wind opened up opportunities for new planting, so there is a bright side to the losses.

Flying fox numbers are building again with the onset of warm weather, but, as the females are giving birth, deterrent action has to be halted for the time being. The establishment of the new colony at Ivanhoe seems to be progressing well, with many flying foxes visiting the caged animals. ARCUE, which is closely involved in the Ivanhoe experiment, has received three grants, and the National Herbarium one grant, from the Australian Research Council, for collaborative work with universities. This is worthy of great praise, given the high degree of competition

A wooden dinghy crafted by a fifth-generation boat builder is the Gardens' latest pride and joy. Named *Euphemia* after Ferdinand Mueller's one-time fiancée, it was launched in August for use on Ornamental Lake. The gift of Paula and Lindsay Fox and their family, the boat is associated with their generous donation to rejuvenate Dallachy Island.

The weatherboard building in Dallas Brooks Drive formerly occupied by the Australian Centre for Contemporary Art is to be leased to the Gardens by Melbourne City Council at a peppercorn rental. It will provide welcome space for education activities and exhibitions. Meanwhile, the Rat House, a legendary and almost derelict structure at the rear of the Observatory Gate site, has been demolished. It makes way for a holding area for plants being assembled for The Ian Potter Foundation Children's Garden.

Heather Ironmonger

Friends of the Orange Botanic Gardens

RECENT VISITORS TO OUR GARDENS will have immediately noticed the excellent new signs at the entrance, which have attracted considerable interest and comment. They include a general information section, with a coloured Gardens map and a collection of brochures. There is a separate board for Friends' activities and also a section for 'Plants of Interest'. The Friends, with the Supervisor's guidance, are preparing a database of plant profiles from which a few plants of seasonal interest can be selected and listed on the board. These will link with a pamphlet giving the plant profiles and indicating their location in the Gardens. This is a great opportunity for the Friends to learn a little more about our plants and to help the educative role of the Gardens.

The Gardens' entrance has also been improved by the extension of decorative lighting poles to cover the full length of the path to the Clover Hill Function Centre, making it much safer for people attending evening meetings and functions. The Friends are now establishing some new plantings in this area, which should make a stunning introduction to the Gardens and will also complement the stone and metal entrance arch donated by the Orange Garden Club in 1999.

There has been an unwelcome 'restructuring' at the other end of the Gardens. A new residential development adjacent to the Gardens included storm water drains discharging directly into the Gardens, resulting in soil washaways and silting of the ponds. (How did such a plan get passed by the Orange City Council?!) After protestations by our Gardens Supervisor and a letter from the Friends' President, Council staff met representatives of the developers and resolved to construct a series of retention

be concealed and the area landscaped. This could result in an attractive wetland area, which at least the birds will enjoy. A cautionary tale for other Friends groups to note! It is clearly essential that any developments around botanic gardens and parks include a requirement that impacts, including visual impact, be assessed and remedial action incorporated onto development plans before any approval is granted.

Two of our most active members, Janet Dunlop and Mick Harvey, have prepared a self-guided walk to demonstrate part of the extensive collection of eucalypts in the Gardens. Twenty-one trees are numbered and linked with a brochure that has corresponding sections containing plant descriptions, tree uses and other interesting features. A map is also included.

On Wednesday and Sunday working bees continue to do very useful work. The Growing Friends not only produce abundant plants to sell at the annual Garden and Outdoor Expo, but also have a trolley-load of seasonal specials available for purchase by visitors attending our monthly guided walks.

The fourth Central West Garden and Outdoor Expo was held on 3 November at the Orange Botanic Gardens. I will report on this big event in the next issue of *Campsis*.

Patricia Bannatyne Honorary Secretary

Friends of Portland Botanic Gardens

AS OUR FRIENDS GROUP IN PORTLAND is very new, our efforts may appear tame to those of you who have been accomplishing great things! But each little step is just wonderful for us. At our general meeting in June we exceeded all expectations and had 60 people along to sandwiches and sherry. They also had the pleasure of listening to one of our committee, who is very interested in history, present a multi-media talk on the history of our Gardens. Not only was Andy's talk excellent, but it also generated a lot of interest.

Our Heritage Masterplan is in full swing, with Richard Aitken winning the appointment. His team has been down many times to scour the Gardens, the archives and the community resources in order to put together a picture of how our Gardens once were. The team will have completed this exciting project and have it ready for presentation in February 2003.

So our little group is progressing nicely!

Jenn Collett Honorary Secretary

Greater Shepparton Botanic Gardens Association

THIS ASSOCIATION WAS ESTABLISHED in May 2000 to address with the Greater Shepparton City Council the neglect and future of Parkside Gardens, Shepparton's 20-hectare public

and Museum, and magnificent birdlife and native flora.

In 1995 Commissioners closed the International Village and it was proposed that 54 houses be built on the area. After public consultation in 1996 the Commissioners resolved that 'Land inside the waterway to be retained as parkland; areas outside the waterway to be redeveloped for residential purposes'. A year later two studies were given to the Council recommending the site as Botanic Gardens.

Late in 1997 the Council resolved to develop a Japanese Garden on the Parkside Gardens site as an area of public open space, but this did not go ahead. In July 2001 this Association proposed to the Council that a 21st Century Gardens should be developed around the existing waterways and infrastructure. However, in September 2002 the Council sealed a Dead of Agreement with the Urban and Regional Land Corporation to sell Parkside Gardens for residential purposes. The URLC proposes to develop a 148-unit residential estate on the site.

Some time ago, the Association of Friends wrote to the Council in support of the protests of this Association, which has recently voiced its objections at a Council meeting. We are grateful for the continued support of the Association of Friends. There is still a long way to go and there will be other opportunities to challenge the proposals. We should be glad of every support that can be given by other Members of the Association of Friends, which can be done by writing to the Greater Shepparton City Council, at Locked Bag 1000, Shepparton, 3632. More background information can be obtained from Pat Moran at 5 Gina Court, Shepparton, or by email from "Pat Moran" <moranpat@cv.quik.net.au>.

Pat Moran, Secretary

Friends of the Royal Botanic Gardens, Sydney

THE FRIENDS ARE HAVING A BUSY TIME leading up to their 21st birthday next year.

With 7000 members state-wide, we are growing stronger all the time, and keeping our members informed is a large part of what the Friends' office staff do on a daily basis.

Our magazine *The Gardens* is produced quarterly and, as well as informative articles, includes our diary of events, which is a useful tool to keep everyone up to date and entertained. Bookings are made through our office and there is a cheerful and happy feeling among the staff and volunteers who man the phones.

Over the last 12 months we have raised over \$300,000 for special projects in the three Botanic Gardens. At the moment we are funding the updating of the Gardens website at a cost of \$176,000, which will make for easier access to events and information for the general public and enhance the Friends' web pages as well.

We are landscaping our backyard at the moment

ings and as a special meeting place for Friends. I am personally committed to enlarging the network of Friends of Regional Botanic Gardens across New South Wales and eventually all of Australia, and look forward to hearing more about what other groups are doing.

Tim Jackson
President

Friends of Warrnambool Botanic Gardens

A MOST SUCCESSFUL TEDDY BEARS' PICNIC organised by the Friends in conjunction with radio 3YB was held in April, attracting 3000 people and 800 teddy bears. Competitions were held and prizes given to teddy bear entrants.

Ian Rossiter, from Ballarat Botanic Gardens, accepted our invitation to speak at the AGM held in July. He gave a most thought-provoking speech, in particular covering challenges that can be expected to arise in the future, such as demands on available water supplies and greater community involvement in botanic gardens. He said that it will be vital for groups such as ours to demonstrate that botanic gardens were serving the needs of the community. He congratulated us on the Federation Fair and the Teddy Bears' Picnic, which together brought some 9000 people to the Gardens. We will hold both functions again next year because of popular demand.

Billie Rowley, our President, announced at the AGM that Isobel Jones and Marie Johnstone had been made life members of the Friends, having been members of the committee from the time of the Friends' inception in 1989.

A most enjoyable luncheon was held in August, when Michael McCoy came to talk to us about his style of garden design, specialising in plants that need minimal watering and low maintenance. Funds raised from the luncheon will go towards the Children's Garden, which we are starting to plan now. This will be incorporated in the review of the 1995 Masterplan that is almost completed.

Marigold Curtis

Friends of Wilson Botanic Park

WILSON BOTANIC PARK, LOCATED ON the Princes Highway in Berwick, was opened to the public as a botanic park in 1992. In 1854 brothers William and James Wilson purchased land in Berwick, including the present area of Wilson Botanic Park. The park has a long history as a blue-metal quarry, first opened by William Wilson Senior in 1859. Rock from the quarry was used for the construction of the Oakleigh to Bunyip railway line, and later for quality road material. The Wilson family let the right to remove stone on a contract basis until 1976.

The northern section of the present park was

James Wilson, on the condition that it was used in perpetuity for parkland in the name of Wilson Park. In 1980 the City of Casey resolved to use Wilson Park as the site of a botanic garden. In 1986 the southern section of the park was purchased from the descendants of William Wilson to create the 36-hectare park as seen today.

After 117 years of quarry operations, the site was left with many interesting landforms, including two lakes, steep cliffs and overburden hills. Bluestone is widely used in the park as the basis for structures and for the recently-constructed amphitheatre.

The park contains plant fossils dating over 22 million years, including the earliest-dated Eucalyptus in the country. The variation in micro-climates within the park enables planting zones to be created, including marshland, North American forest, a pinetum, savannah and grassland, temperate rainforest, native plantings and areas of mixed natives and exotics.

The park was officially opened by the Governor-General, George Hayden, in 1992 and incorporates walking tracks, a lookout tower, a bird hide, an amphitheatre, rotundas, two lakes and a marshland, a playground, barbecues and picnic tables.

The park is used by residents of the City of Casey and further afield as a leisure facility, popular for family picnics and outings. It is a popular venue for weddings, photographic sessions and naming ceremonies. The park has developed an Education Program, providing education opportunities for school students in a park environment. An expanding calendar of events will see Wilson Botanic Park develop as a venue to enjoy a range of special events throughout the year.

Coming events include:

- Junior Bunyip Program in the summer holidays
- Sunset Cinema, Saturday 11 January
- Bertie the Bunyip and the Polluted Pond, a play for the whole family, Saturday 18 January, 2 p.m. and 7 p.m.
- Jazz by the Lake, Saturday 1 February, 5 p.m. to 9 p.m.
- St Valentine's Day Picnic, Friday 14 February.

The community, through the Friends of Wilson Botanic Park, is actively involved in the operation and development of the park. It is open every day except Good Friday and Christmas Day, from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. (until 8 p.m. during the months of Daylight Saving). Entry is free. Come and enjoy a great day out for the whole family!

Kylie Trott
Manager

From the Secretary

I AM PARTICULARLY GRATEFUL to all those who have contributed so quickly to this issue of *Campsis*. These contributions have come from half the number of Members, and I would be delighted if the next issue brought you news from an

The Annual General Meeting in 2003 will be held on Friday 28 March, probably in Ballarat. An invitation for Members to nominate representatives for election to the Committee will be sent to Members in January. Such nominations must reach me by Friday 7 March. I mention this matter now so that Members' Committees can begin to think about this in good time. It is likely that some present members of the Committee will be nominated for re-election to the positions they now hold and that there will be some vacancies among the 'ordinary' members of the Committee. Details will be advised when the invitation is sent out in January. The next meeting of the Committee will take place immediately before the Annual General Meeting.

The usual request for contributions for *Campsis* will be sent to Members early in March, the deadline for copy being Friday 4 April. This will allow the result of the election of members of the Committee to be included in that issue.

The enclosed flyer is sent at the suggestion of John Hawker, who mentioned this book at the Ballarat Conference.

Lawrence Cohn