



EUCALYPT

AAFBG Newsletter

No 54 MAY 2020

The devastation of a bushfire

At approximately 7.30am New Years Eve 2019 intense fire raged from the west towards Batemans Bay, it crossed the Princes Highway and roared through the Eurobodalla Regional Botanic Garden. The speed and intensity of the fire was shocking, in less than 30 minutes the entire 103 acre site was engulfed.

Michael Anlezark, Manager, Eurobodalla Regional Botanic Garden



Main picture: Sentinels. Inserts from left: hot fire; children's walk, our tractor, the great survivors.. Photos by ???

Sadness and recovery

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Australian Association of Friends of Botanic Gardens

Incorporation: AOO26805Z

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Vice-President: Murray Fletcher Friends Orange BG

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Buninyong BG

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Annette Irish, Friends Brisbane BG and
Sherwood Arboretum

Warwick Sellens, Friends Ballarat BG

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Membership

Annual Subscriptions are due on 1 April

\$50 for up to 250 members

\$150 for 250-500 members \$250 for 500-

1000 members

\$400 for 1000+ members

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Editor Anne Rawson

email: eucalyptar@gmail.com

We welcome your articles for inclusion and pho-
tographs and important calendar events.

Closing dates are 30 March and 30 September
approximately six weeks prior to publication.

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Farewell from Ro



Kathy Wright (Treasurer), Elizabeth Gilfillan (Acting Sec.) Ro Noone (de-
parting Admin Officer) and Janet Thomson OAM a past President, at Ro's
farewell in Ballarat.

Dear Friends,

Firstly, give yourselves a huge pat on the back for
all the wonderful voluntary work you do for the
benefit of botanic gardens and the community.
AAFBG is the 'glue' which helps Friends of Botanic
Gardens, Parks and Arboreta around Australia
stick together. It has been my absolute pleasure to
keep Friends informed and support the Committee
over six and a half years.

Retiring was a hard decision to make but, as we all
know, now more than ever, life and family needs
change. I am sure your new Admin Officer, Chan-
tal, will bring with her much expertise and innova-
tion, and I wish her well in the role.

My thanks to the Committee and members I have
met over the years for your support and friendship.
Lastly, I will continue to follow AAFBG's activities
with keen interest and wish you all well in your
botanical endeavours.

Best wishes, Ro.

Would you like to be Secretary of the AAFBG?

A great job, supporting Wayne, the President, the
Committee and Chantal, the Admin Officer, a most
enjoyable team role.

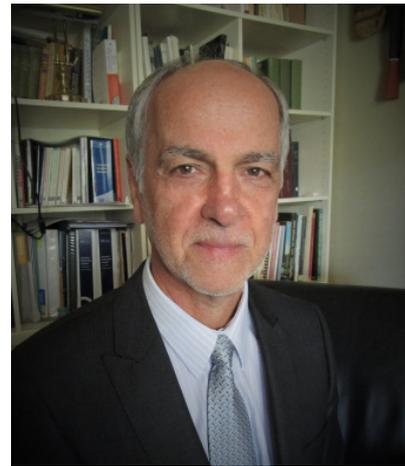
And also meeting lots of wonderful Friends, learn-
ing a lot about other Gardens, and taking back good
ideas to your own Friends.

And it is not too much work.

Contact Wayne or Chantal at:
info@friendsbotanicgardens.org

From the President

Wayne Harvey



This is a year of cancelled events everywhere. The AAFBG's program for 2020 included participation in the Melbourne International Flower and Garden Show, our biennial Conference and our AGM in Brisbane – all of which were cancelled at short notice.

The planning for these events came from a great deal of effort by many people over several months and we do not want to see that effort wasted. So, while we have managed cancellations, this will also be a year for applying that planning to similar events at another time and, in some cases, another place.

We will have an AGM this year, at a time and in a manner that complies with the regulations. AGMs are important opportunities for members to hear what is going on, to ask questions and to have a say in the business of the Association.

Members are aware we are considering an arrangement with Neutrog Australia Pty Ltd to provide access to Neutrog biological fertiliser products at discounted prices. Responses to date indicate a high level of interest in the proposal, although some members may have overlooked the initial notification from us while distracted by other matters. In summary, AAFBG member organisations and their individual members will be able to purchase Neutrog products at a member's price which represents a substantial saving. Each AAFBG member organisation will be provided with a code to be used to secure the reduced price from Neutrog. Orders will be placed online by the member organisation at the Neutrog online shop and payment will be made online directly to Neutrog. AAFBG will not be included in the transaction.



Orders will be bundled and delivered by Neutrog to a centrally located Botanic Garden for collection, with an offer of Neutrog product to that Garden to offset any inconvenience in providing a collection point. It is important to note this is an arrangement initiated by AAFBG and Neutrog. Neutrog will only provide preferential access to organisations who are

members of AAFBG. Please note that AAFBG will not monitor your organisation's transactions with Neutrog. For those member organisations who have not yet done so, please reply to AAFBG at info@friendsbotanicgardens.org indicating a "yes" or "no". Your initial response will be without any obligation.

Our colleagues at BGANZ run an annual Botanic Gardens Day on the last Sunday in May. The 2020 Botanic Gardens Day will be a special virtual event to accommodate the current social isolation and distancing regulations. AAFBG will participate in the BGANZ virtual Botanic Gardens Day on Sunday 31 May and AAFBG members are invited to post photos and videos about their favourite plant, garden etc on BGANZ's YouTube and Facebook sites.

Panel Discussion LIVE stream **Botanic Gardens**
 CONSERVATION, HORTICULTURE, EDUCATION, COMMUNITY & COVID19

Costa Georgiadis
 Landscape architect,
 Educator & TV host

Prof Lesley Hughes
 Climate Scientist &
 Distinguished Professor
 Macquarie University

Prof Tim Entwisle
 Director & Chief Executive
 Royal Botanic Gardens
 Victoria

Dr Lucy Sutherland
 Director
 Botanic Gardens of
 South Australia

Julia Watson
 Education & Partnerships
 Auckland
 Botanic Gardens

Donna Jackson
 Coordinator
 Mackay
 Regional Botanic Gardens

Botanic Gardens Day **11:45 AEST – 31 May**

bganz
 bganz.org.au

BOTANIC GARDENS DAY
 AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND

**BOTANIC GARDENS DAY PANEL DISCUSSION
 JOIN US LIVE!**

To capture where botanic gardens are positioned in 2020, this year for Botanic Gardens Day we will be streaming live with our ambassador and panel host Costa Georgiadis, Landscape architect, Educator & TV host.

Joining us to discuss many and varied topics, from our dwindling biodiversity and Australian bushfire recovery to COVID-19 are our panelists:

- Prof Lesley Hughes, Climate Scientist & Distinguished Professor, Macquarie University;
- Prof Tim Entwisle, Director & Chief Executive, Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria;
- Dr Lucy Sutherland, Director, Botanic Gardens of South Australia and
- Julia Watson, Education & Partnerships , Auckland Botanic Gardens
- Donna Jackson, Coordinator Mackay Regional Botanic Gardens, Far North Queensland

The areas of discussion mainly center around five topics: Covid19, Botanic Gardens and Conservation, Horticulture, Education & Community.

Save the Date!

Sunday 31 May – 11:45am AEST

Live steaming on:

- Live web cast: <http://botanicgardens.livewebcast.com.au/>
- Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/bganzinc/>
- Twitter: <https://twitter.com/BGANZ1>

Acting Secretary's Report

Elizabeth Gilfillan



Autumn is different in all parts of Australia and in all our Gardens, Australia-wide; it is predominately a time to settle into the next life cycle. In the north in the dry season, tropical flowers change. Moving south soaring heat succumbs to warm days and blue sky. And further south the brilliance of autumn colour prepares us for winter.

This Autumn, like no other, has connected us all with one thread.



Your AAFBG brings many people together, all with the one aspiration. In this edition of *Eucalypt* you can read:

Stories of trial and sorrow, but also spirit and resilience, determination, human need, of delay not cancellation, healing and hope, affection and enthusiasm

Stories of keeping plants alive under extraordinary circumstances.

Stories about Gardens of the future and tested notions.

Stories of new/old gardens and a new friends group at Ivanhoe Park, begun in 1800 and listed in 2007 and Friends formed in 2018 when a group of local enthusiasts lobbied to work hand in hand with Council. Congratulations Ivanhoe Park.

Stories of innovation, gardeners working online in Sydney, keeping Friends together and informed.

There is great disappointment that AAFBG Conference in Brisbane has been cancelled, sincere thanks to Friends of Brisbane BGSA for planning the event, more news soon.

How important our Beautiful public places are in times of crisis. We are all in this together.

The stories here are both humbling and inspiring the importance of your belonging to your Peak Body is evident and crucial to each other, thank you for your membership and belonging to your Peak Body, keeping the threads together.

Farewell Ro and thanks for your Admin. Assistance over the last six years.

I would like to welcome Chantal your new AO who has taken this role with great enthusiasm and vigour. You will all get to meet Chantal over the coming months.

Administrative Officer's Report

Chantal de Vere



Dear Friends

I am so happy to have been provided an opportunity to work with such passionately like-minded people. Although I have only been the Administration Officer for a very short time, I can see how many wonderful groups there are and how much time is put in by all the volunteers.

The newsletters that come through and the photography skills that are apparent show me how much there is in Australia that I am yet to experience. Many of you may have noticed that I am adding links or photographs from Friends and inviting other friends of mine to join the AAFBG Facebook page. Why I do this is as the overarching association I feel that it is necessary to keep the public and you informed of all the precious work that is being done. Social media can be and is a great tool to push your information and goals if used correctly.

My background, as for most people are in later years, is varied and yet has always had a common thread of environmental concerns. I grew up in the Mary Valley near Gympie on a dairy farm so I feel I had a very privileged childhood. During these wonderful years I saw impacts on the land and ways to mitigate. I didn't know at that time how much those years would play a role in future careers.

Gardening is my life here and writing about it and talking about it. I am part of the Horticultural Media Association of Australia which means I get to see and talk to stars of the TV occasionally and thankfully they are just gardeners like the rest of gardeners. Good people who like dirt.

The last few years I have organised and run a garden event in my local area which runs for two days with loads of fun and guest speakers. I thought I would give that a go and boost the community here where I live as there are loads of nurseries, wholesalers and great gardeners.

Skipping back many decades, I studied environmental science and have a Masters degree in Environmental Protection. Putting all of my interests together I now get to see another side of what I love most, people protecting the environment, and plants.

If I can ever be of any help to you please email and I can see what I can do to be of assistance to you. Thanks for everything you do.

Fire Gardens

*Friends of Botanic Gardens of Adelaide
Adelaide, South Australia*

Over four magical March nights, as part of Adelaide Festival, Adelaide Botanic Garden was a hive of activity; an already extraordinary landscape transformed into a mesmerising wonderland of firelight, kinetic sculptures and live, ethereal music. We were incredibly thrilled to host French artistic collective, Compagnie Carabosse, who are renowned for their spellbinding illuminations of public sites all over the world, from Stonehenge in England to Moscow's Kremlin Square, from Hue Bridge in Vietnam to Pont du Gard in the south of France.



Photographs by Andrew Beveridge

Slow, deep beats echoed around the Garden whilst pots of fire created walkways in several directions towards different light features and experiences: warm lanterns, giant fire orbs, flickering urns, and fiery pits. Lit by candles, floating ghostly spectres filled The Palm House; a river of fire sat atop the Main Lake; rings of fire became a tunnel to walk through; and the lawns across from the Deadhouse were home to large, lit swing sets that visitors could sit on.

Almost 40,000 people attended the Garden after dark across the period, with Friday and Saturday nights surpassing 10,000 attendees each night.

Given the bushfire crisis that arose prior to the Fire Gardens event, Adelaide Festival announced that it would donate profits to the Lobethal Bushfire Recovery Fund, the Kangaroo Island Mayoral Relief & Recovery Bushfire Fund and the RSPCA South Australia Bushfire Appeal. In solidarity, we announced that Adelaide Botanic Garden profits from Fire Gardens would go to the SA Seed Conservation Centre who are doing vital work to regenerate the fire-damaged landscape.

Fire Gardens provided an exciting opportunity to open up Adelaide Botanic Garden at night so visitors could enjoy our beautiful garden in a new way. It was an opportunity for audiences to experience and contemplate the timeless beauty and magic of firelight in a safe environment. Further, it allowed us to support Adelaide Festival and the social, cultural and economic benefits it generates for South Australians.

Fire Gardens was just the first in a series of curated evening experiences as part of our Botanica Luminaria program linking to plants, the environment and sustainability, so watch this space.

Lucy Sutherland



Smoke, hail, virus, deferred celebration

Friends of the Australian National Botanic Gardens Canberra, ACT

Trying to be positive at times like this is hard. 2020 was going to be a big year for Friends of the ANBG. It is the 50th year since the Gardens were opened by PM John Gorton and the 30th year since the Friends were founded. We had over 50 events planned.

While we had a lot of serious smoke for days in January our first disaster was a massive hail storm that smashed not only the living collection but a number of our key buildings. Garden education and office buildings along with greenhouses for the Gardens and our Growing Friends were all to some extent badly affected and are now undergoing repairs. The Growing Friends had to resurrect plants destined for the April Plant Sale, which is not now being held because of Covid-19. A small army of Friends helped with cleaning up the mess left by the hail. The Gardens were closed for a couple of days on both occasions, for smoke and for hail.



The small army of Friends, and the path in the Rainforest covered in leaf debris. Photos by Parks Australia.

Now with the virus the Gardens are closed to the public at least until 18 June, but the staff continue to do good work on the living collections and even more importantly on new developments.

Our wonderful Banksia Garden, which the Friends have assisted in funding, is now being planted out with almost all of the species from around Australia. After hard work by our horticulturalists, with advice from the very best banksia experts in Australia, soil and drainage conditions, and even to some extent micro-climate conditions, have been tweaked so that most of these species should thrive. The big events we had planned for the opening will only be delayed not put off.

Meanwhile tenders have been called for the construction of another new icon for the Gardens, the Ian Potter Conservatory which will be the only place in the world where a large range of the tropical species of Australia can be significantly displayed indoors for the benefit and education of tourists and visitors to the Gardens. When completed it will not only be special for its collection but will set new benchmarks in design for conservatories. Friends have committed significant funds for the interpretation program for this building, also innovative in design.

And finally, and equally exciting, work continues on design for our permanent Seedbank building to replace the very tired recycled buildings which have served well for many decades.

The living collection continues to heal from the storm and our hopes lie in wait for a new brighter future for the Gardens, and the Friends, after the lockdown is over!

Max Bourke AM, President

Award winning garden!

Friends of Bendigo Botanic Gardens Bendigo, Victoria

Since their formation in 2000 the Friends of Bendigo Botanic Gardens have worked diligently to support the Gardens and in 2019 we were rewarded when our new Garden for the Future won an award from the Australian Institute of Landscape Architects Victoria.

The story of the development of that garden began back in 2010 when a master plan was completed and approved by council. A major component of this plan was the substantial expansion of the Gardens onto adjacent vacant land. The expansion plans included a Central Visitors Hub, an Arboretum and a Garden for the Future (GFTF). Funding for the GFTF component became available in 2013 and by 2014 landscape architects were employed to develop a detailed design in consultation with the Friends and others.



The brief for the GFTF was to ‘create a beautiful, engaging and adaptable contemporary garden’ celebrating the cultural identity of Bendigo and to ‘respond to, and lead the community in an era of climate change’. The garden achieves this through show-casing and educating visitors on climate responsive planting choices that are suitable for both our current and predicted climate.

It was exciting to see works begin in 2017 and by April 2018 the new Garden was opened. Then last year the GFTF won the Landscape Architects’ state award in the Garden category. The Judges were impressed by the designers’ experiments with rare and curious plants saying they tested notions of what a botanic garden could be. The GFTF was designed by TCL with the planting design under-taken by Paul Thompson.

The GFTF is a 3 ha contemporary extension of the Gardens containing more than 30,000 climate-resilient plants and 4,700 square metres of lawn. The garden has three distinct areas, the ‘International Biome’, the ‘Australian Biome’ and the ‘Fun and Fantasy Lawn’. The first is composed of imported species, the second of Australian species, and the third a mix of both.

The garden also features a shelter/stage building complete with toilet facilities with a grassed amphitheatre for outdoor performances and a promenade that can be used for events. Seating was installed using recycled timber, including reclaimed Red Gum from the trees that were removed as a result of the Ravenswood interchange project on the Calder Freeway. The GFTF does not use any potable water for irrigation; it uses exclusively recycled water, future proofing the gardens in case of drought and water restrictions.

The GFTF has been really well embraced by the Greater Bendigo community since opening in 2018 with 40,000 visits in its first year of operation. During the recent COVID 19 restrictions it has certainly highlighted the importance of having beautiful public spaces in times of crisis.

Planning for a Master Plan

Friends of the Buninyong Botanic Gardens Ballarat, Victoria

Buninyong Botanic Gardens, established in 1861, is one of the oldest in Victoria. It is in two parts: the upper part has a spring and surface fed reservoir called the Gong (1850); the lower part has enjoyed far greater focus and activity over the centuries. In the 1980s, Buninyong's original legal precinct was incorporated into the Gardens.

The Gardens are managed by the Ballarat City Council. The Gardens has a collection of uncommon conifers: the outstanding Spanish fir (*Abies pinsapo*); the Italian Maple (*Acer opalus*) is rare with only three other specimens known in Victoria; and the Norway Maple (*A. platanoides*). Many of these early trees came from Baron von Mueller at the Melbourne Gardens.

There is also an elegant latticed rotunda built in 1901, Victoria's earliest memorial to Queen Victoria after her death. In the old legal precinct are the Court Warden's Office (1858) and the Buninyong Butter Factory (1892). The walled garden was built in 1861, originally a bluestone-lined reservoir, becoming the town's swimming baths in 1872 until the 1950s, with reinforced concrete walls added by ex-servicemen in the 1920s.



The Buninyong Gardens, not surprisingly, are listed on the Victorian Heritage Register as of State significance due to its historical, aesthetic, scientific and social standing. The Council recently proposed two projects for the Gardens: to repair the leaking wall of the Gong reservoir and to fix the instability in the walls surrounding the walled garden. These projects will jointly cost at least \$1.5 million.

The Friends of Buninyong BG (FBGBG) have been lobbying

for work to be done on the Gong wall for some time as in winter the seepage turns the lower garden into an impassable quagmire. The reinforced concrete garden walls have become so unstable that Council has barred public access. But the FBGBG are concerned that 'the Gong and walled gardens projects are being commissioned without appropriate community consultation or reference to the underlying landscape, heritage, social, recreational and educational values or future potential of the Gardens'. The Friends are therefore recommending that a comprehensive master plan be developed in consultation with the community. To this end they, with other interested parties, have drawn up an Information Memorandum (IM) for a master plan and have submitted it to Council.

The Memorandum lists a wide range of issues that should be considered when drawing up the Master Plan, including: the range of users and their different requirements; an integrated water management plan; connection to Country; the connections between the Gong and the Gardens; relation to other open spaces in the Ballarat district; the importance of the historical and heritage elements; landscaping and plant collections; the surrounding streetscape; the biological and ecological development of the Gardens.

The Friends have enlisted a specialist reference group of five ardent residents of Buninyong with expertise in public gardens, landscape planning and heritage matters. FBGBG is hopeful that Council will soon recognise the merit of their proposal and respond positively to the IM. So watch this space for developments.

Roger Permezel, President

Sadness and recovery

Friends of the Eurobodalla Regional Botanic Gardens Batemans Bay, New South Wales

It is with great sadness that we report that the bushfires that have so devastated the east coast of Australia this summer have had a devastating impact on our Garden, but fortunately not the beautifully redeveloped Visitors Centre, café or Herbarium.



I am equally very proud to report that it has not impacted the affection or enthusiasm shown by Friends, volunteers, the community, the Garden Manager and Supervisors along with the Council. Rebuilding infrastructure and securing the safety of the site is well underway to enable the Garden to reopen the doors firstly to the volunteers and then to the public. Then everyone can be involved either assisting in the recovery of the Garden or observing the progress, not only of the infrastructure but also to watch the recovery of our amazing bushland site.

The fires destroyed large parts of the site. Every garden bed, every bridge and walkway bar one, the pathways, retaining walls, the signage, labels and interpretive material, and fencing, all damaged or destroyed and the residence, workshops and storage sheds with tractors and all tools either melted or burned. Our well-loved play space has partly survived.

Thirty per cent of the Nursery stock survived but sadly the tanks, irrigation, and pumps were all destroyed so a plan was implemented to 'foster a box'. Surviving stock was distributed to willing volunteers to nurture the plants until they can be recalled to the Gardens. A day and time for pickup was arranged in the ERBG carpark which had been made safe against falling trees. This proved to be not only therapy for the plants but also for all who turned up. That valuable human need to connect with others, share stories and check on those that we have worried about through those very stressful days. The value of a garden is huge and invaluable is so many ways!



This event was supervised by the ERBG staff members who were and are inspirational in their positivity and enthusiasm to rebuild the Gardens and to open the doors again so that all can enjoy not only the much loved community facility but also its continuing role as a resource for information, scientific and environmental discovery.

Not only were all the ERBG staff present so were many representatives of the Council, there to give their support and to reassure everyone that they are doing all they can to help the Gardens reopen better than ever.

The fires were followed by some seriously heavy, beautiful and much needed, restorative rain. The rain fell consistently over a number of days and put out the huge fires and caused some flooding. As a final note I'd like to report that the one remaining walkway bridge was washed away in the floods. Talk about drought and flooding rains!

This article was written in early March 2020 and since then the impact of Coronavirus has contributed a second blow, as it has to everyone the world over. Progress continues with the dedicated and hardworking staff and a very small number of volunteers on site each day doing all they can to restore the site.

Elizabeth Barraclough

Previous page: The firelicked the new building; our Visitor Centre for weeks after the fire; Foster a Box day. This page: Three weeks later, a flood; a survivor appears two months later; new life!

The Grampians get another Garden

Friends of Grampians Flora Botanic Garden Halls Gap, Victoria

Halls Gap is a small town in Western Victoria nestled in the Grampians National Park with a population of about 400 and yet we are soon to have two Botanic gardens. How can that be?

Firstly, the well-established one. The Grampians Flora Botanic Garden was established by a volunteer group in 1996 right in town, just behind the primary school in our valley. It had a couple of good years with much enthusiasm. But then the millennium drought arrived. Water was short and the wildlife, both native and introduced, were hungry. Then came the massive bushfires of 2006. The garden escaped, just, but everyone's attention was on the recovery of our magnificent but almost totally burnt National Park, and we still had drastic water restrictions. But finally normal rains arrived and we set to work. We fenced it, we replanted, we worked on getting grants.

Now in 2020 we have a Garden we feel we can be proud of. It is still totally maintained by a small group of volunteers but most of our plants are labelled, we have a children's trail, sculptures, a solar fountain, and we more or less have most weeds under control most of the time.

So why a second garden? As I said, our Garden is in a valley, we have many tall eucalypts and acacias. There are many local plants we can never hope to grow well. So we were very happy when a second garden was proposed by another group of enthusiastic volunteers. They have bought a property out on the plain, less than 8 km away. Here they plan to build the Wildlife Art Museum of Australia (WAMA). It will boast a dedicated wildlife art gallery that explores the interconnection between art and nature, set within gardens and wetlands that nurture and protect rare species of plants and animals. Part of that reserve will be devoted to local grassland flora, and it will also incorporate a botanic garden featuring Grampians endemic species. They have obtained a grant and are have just completed a fence to keep the grazing animals out, and are busy making plans for the new plantings.



The gate to the WAMA site



The wetland area

The Grampians Flora Garden doesn't currently have a website, but there is a little on the Community Association website (hallsgapcommunity.org.au) and we have a Facebook page. WAMA has a website wama.net.au and a Facebook page.

So when at last you can travel around our land, do come and look at what we have in our area.

Margo Sietsma

And Margo took the photos

Nearly normal life at Orange BG

*Friends of Orange Botanic Gardens
Orange, New South Wales*



Libby West, committee member, tending the little plants. Photo: Jude Keogh, Central Western Daily. Reproduced with permission.

nursery at any one time to undertake the watering.

The really good news is that we have had good steady autumn rain which has revitalised the Gardens and helped keep the little potted plants feeling and looking healthy.

Cultivated Chat on Mallees

The latest in our series of Cultivated Chats was held on 14 March (just before gatherings of this size were made illegal in New South Wales) and featured Anthony O'Halloran from Bilby Blooms speaking on Mallees: garden sized majesty and how to maintain them. The talk was preceded by a guided walk through the Orange Botanic Gardens' eucalypt collection led by FOBG member Chris Mills. A delicious box lunch was enjoyed after Anthony's talk and members were able to purchase some of these special plants from Anthony for their own gardens. The event was listed on Eucalypt Australia's website as a Eucalypt Day 2020 Event.



Marble block looking towards Mt Canobolas. Photo: Lorraine Milla.

FOBG Plant Sale cancelled

Every spring and autumn, the people of Orange flock to the Friends of Orange Botanic Gardens' plant sales, our biggest earners of funds for our work in the Gardens. Unfortunately, with the Covid-19 virus stalking the planet, our autumn sale, which was originally scheduled for the first Sunday in April, has been cancelled. This creates a bit of an issue with thousands of plants in pots needing to be watered regularly and continuing to grow until our next sale which hopefully will proceed in November. With restrictions on group gatherings, only two people can be present in the

Interpretive Sign for Marble Block

In the May 2017 issue of *Eucalypt*, we reported that one of the last blocks of red marble from the Borenore Marble Quarry had been installed in Orange Botanic Gardens, after it was donated by FOBG members John and Lorraine Milla. At last, there is now an interpretive sign explaining the origins of the marble and its history. With landscaping still to be completed, the story of the block is now available for passers-by. It is situated near the western edge of the Gardens with a vista across Orange to Mt Canobolas, the volcanic source of the heat and pressure needed to convert a former piece of local limestone into such a beautiful piece of marble.

Murray Fletcher, Hon. Secretary

Everything on-line

Foundation & Friends of the Royal Botanic Gardens Sydney, New South Wales

In this time of Covid-19 we are all working from home but this does not mean we are closed! We have been hard-at-work bringing our members on-line solutions to replace physical events and activities. We have never been busier!

The *PLANTS* exhibition went on-line in March and April, then was quickly extended due to popularity to end of May. Members and the public can view and purchase exquisite artworks inspired by our artist's love of plants. This exhibition is not to be missed: bit.ly/RBGplantswithaheart

We are excited about a new online store at all three Botanic Gardens' websites - Sydney, Mount Annan and Mount Tomah – on Monday 1 June, bringing visitors a simply stunning and carefully curated online shop of artworks and gifts, inspired by the Botanic Gardens. Favourites from past exhibitions will return, such as artists featured in Wild Thing, Harvest and *PLANTS* exhibitions. Keep an eye on www.rbg Syd.nsw.gov.au

The winter edition of our members' magazine The Gardens is going digital so that we may reach more people and share stories from the Botanic Gardens. Our 'What's On' monthly e-newsletter is now a fortnightly 'What's Online' and is packed full of interesting articles. Our Facebook and Instagram accounts are growing ever popular as we deliver daily images and updates. Please follow: [@foundationandfriends](https://www.instagram.com/foundationandfriends)

Missing the great outdoors? You can now take a digital tour of the Botanic Gardens with Garden Explorer: 'Visit' each of the three Botanic Gardens, navigate each plant bed, and discover our extensive living collection. There are 22,969 plants and 7,660 different taxa to be explored in the Royal Botanic Garden alone! bit.ly/RBGGardenExplorer

Our Botanic Gardens were directly impacted by the recent bushfires, burning 25 per cent of the living collection at the Blue Mountains Botanic Garden at Mount Tomah and more than 90 per cent of its surrounding conservation forest. While we are working to address these direct, local impacts, our scientists and horticulturalists are also working on real solutions to help ensure all plant life can withstand a changing climate. You can help us safeguard our plants and our future by visiting rbgsyd.nsw.gov.au/donate. Costa Georgiadis recently paid a visit to the Garden with Dr Brett Summerell, Chief Botanist from the Royal Botanic Garden. Watch as they investigate how the landscape has begun to regenerate: bit.ly/ABCafterthefire

Finally, a farewell to Jimmy Turner, our outgoing Director of Horticulture. Jimmy has been a great supporter and friend to Foundation & Friends and his contribution will be sorely missed. We take this opportunity to welcome John Siemon to the role of Acting Director of Horticulture.

Charlotte Terrier, Marketing & Membership Manager



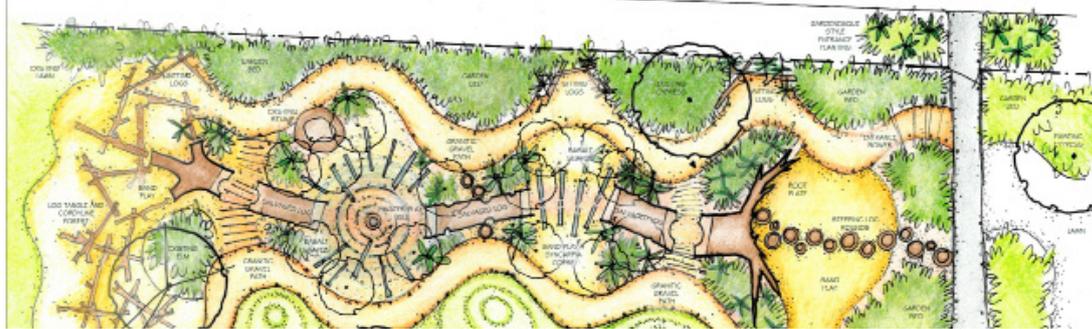
Memories of Home: Night Queen by Neha Gupte. Garden Explorer Royal Botanic Garden Sydney

A heart-warming show of support

Friends of Warrnambool Botanic Gardens Warrnambool, Victoria

It was the Friends of Warrnambool Botanic Gardens 30th anniversary last year. Throughout that time their prime objective has been the maintenance and development of our historic Guilfoyle Garden.

In 2018 the Friends developed a proposal for a nature based play space in the Gardens and it was seen appropriate to compete for funds under Pick my Project, an initiative of the Victorian Government. It proved very popular, gaining 347 votes.



The WBG are on the Victorian Heritage Register, but we hoped for a permit exemption as the design did not impact on any significant plants and involved no major structures. We had secured the services of Laidlaw and Laidlaw to do the design as we were aware of their experience in similar projects and their knowledge of Guilfoyle gardens. After lengthy discussions, further expense in obtaining advice from heritage advisors all involving long delays, Heritage Victoria formed the view that the play area might harm the Gardens.

They considered the play space to have significant impact to the heritage value of the Gardens as it is not in keeping with the design intent and objectives, and that the proposed location has not had a history of 'change'.

The Friends did not agree. However Heritage Victoria decided the proposal should be advertised for public comment. It was, and they received an unprecedented 154 letters of support and not one objection. Those letters were all thoughtful, many of them passionate, and they supported our submission as appropriate to Guilfoyle's design.



Our Nature Play Space will be to the north or on the right of the lake from this photo.

In March 2020 the Friends were relieved to learn that the nature play area had been given the green light by Heritage Victoria.

Conditions apply, but we can work with them. It has been a long drawn out exhausting and expensive process, but the outstanding show of support from individuals, clubs and organisations is confirmation of the value placed on our Gardens by our community. We would like to take this opportunity to thank the AAFBG for their letter of support along with the many other institutions and individuals. It provides encouragement for the implementation of this exciting development. The Friends are buoyed up by the show of support and forever grateful to the people of Warrnambool.



‘LOOK! CORONA VIRUS!’

John Zwar, President of Australian Arid Lands Botanic Gardens, who now lives in Adelaide, was out on a nature walk with his three grandchildren, looking at different plant features and insects in a big reserve nearby. They looked for flowers, birds ferns, spider webs, insects, different leaves, etc. They stopped under a Liquidamber tree and Ziggy, aged 9, looked up at the fruits and yelled ‘CORONA VIRUS’.

That broke John up, so he sent the story to an old friend, Alex Smart, at the Cranbourne Gardens in Victoria, and Alex has sent it on to us, with John’s approval.

A bit of background. John Zwar OAM was the one who came up with the idea for a botanic garden at Port Augusta in 1981. The Garden has now contributed an estimated \$18m to the Pt Augusta economy.

Australian Association of Friends of Botanic Gardens Inc

The AAFBG has 63 active member organisations, representing around 18,000 volunteers who give their time and skills to botanic gardens, parks and arboreta across Australia. AAFBG also has five international affiliate organisations.

The AAFBG has an MoU with the Botanic Gardens Australia and New Zealand (BGANZ) to ensure volunteers and professional staff of gardens, parks and arboreta have opportunities to cooperate at a range of levels to achieve their complementary aims.

The AAFBG is also a member of Botanic Gardens Conservation International, an organisation representing botanic gardens in more than 100 countries in a global network for plant conservation.

For information about Members see AAFBG website at

www.friendsbotanicgardens.org

also see website for full calendar of events

Calendar of events 2020

31 May BGANZ Botanic Garden Day

See page 4 for details of Panel Discussion live stream

Websites worth visiting

Visit our website:

www.friendsbotanicgardens.org

Contact website editor to list your events or add garden photos to the members' gallery:

info@WordsWorthcommunicating.com

BGANZ on line Newsletter – *The Botanic Garden*

www.bganz.org.au/newsletter

Botanic Gardens Conservation International

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

Garden Plant Conservation Association of Australia

www.gpcaa.com

Australian Native Plants Society

<http://asgap.org.au>

Significant Tree Registers – there are a number of State and local registers. Search: Significant Trees

Plants for the Planet:

www.plantsfortheplanet.com

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