

Association of Friends of Botanic Gardens: Connecting Friends for 20 years!



Southern Highlands BG plant sale



Story telling under the Elms at Williamstown



Mackay Regional BG

This year, 2013, we celebrate our 20th anniversary and we are delighted to say, we are still here! We have managed to gather a few snippets from our beginnings to celebrate this.

Beginnings

A letter from Eve Brunner, Activities Sub-committee, Friends Royal Botanic Garden Melbourne, sent to Ian Rogers, Director Geelong Botanic Gardens reads:

Weekend Seminar 18-19 May 1991

As there are now a number of "Friends of Botanic Gardens" groups around Victoria, the Melbourne Friends think that it is appropriate to hold a weekend seminar to discuss matters of common interest.'

The seminar was very successful, attended by Friends and others from local authorities and repeated in May 1992 at the RBG Melbourne Herbarium, resulting in strong support for the establishment of an umbrella organisation.

Incorporation was established on 20 January 1993

The inaugural group was led by President Phillip Clingin from Ballarat, supported by Secretary Laurence Cohn, Treasurer David Taplin, and Philip Ayton (RBG Melbourne), Margaret McOrist (Port Fairy), Jayne Salmon (Geelong), Neil Laird (RBG Cranbourne) and Ethel Stephenson (Benalla).

Initial Aim

To continue to hold annual Friends' conferences and to publish a newsletter, Campsis, twice a year using articles contributed by the members. This has continued since October 1993.

The Annual subscription was set at \$25 but reduced to \$20 in 1994 to accommodate members, making an interesting comparison with today!

Association Conferences

Conferences have provided a core of connection, information and promotion for Friends and Botanic Gardens, always of a high standard, well managed and supported, attracting new members and new ideas. Held annually until 2002, conferences then became bi-ennial to alternate with the Australasian Guide conferences. The first AFBG Conference was hosted by the Ballarat Friends in April 1993. It included the first Annual General Meeting, where the Presidency passed to Jayne Salmon, Geelong, given Geelong Friends were to host the following conference in 1994.

Association of Friends of Botanic Gardens

Incorporation: AOO26805Z

Office bearers

President: Geraldine Davis, AALBG Pt Augusta

Past President: Janet Thomson, RBG Melbourne

Vice-President: Warwick Wright, ANBG ACT

Sec/Public Officer: Annie McGeachy, Geelong

Treasurer: Karlene Taylor, RBG Melbourne

Committee

John Bentley, Melton BG

Elizabeth Gilfillan, Ballarat BG

Neil Morley, Gold Coast Regional BG

Patrice O'Shea, Wombat Hill BG

Alex Smart, RBG Cranbourne

Beverley Windsor, Gold Coast Regional BG

John Zwar, AALBG Pt Augusta

Admin Officer

Ro Noone, Geelong Vic

Address

Assoc. of Friends of Botanic Gardens Inc.

PO Box 983, Geelong, Vic 3220

Email: info@friendsbotanicgardens.org

Telephone: (03) 5222 8787

Website

www.friendsbotanicgardens.org

Web Managers: Wordsworth Communicating

Email: info@WordsWorthcommunicating.com

Membership

Annual Membership from 1 April 2014: \$30

for up to 100 financial members, \$50 from

101-250 members, \$100 from 251-500

members, \$200 from 501-1000 members,

\$300 over 1000 member.

Pay by direct transfer to BSB 633-000

A/c No: 1045-71476 and use group name as reference.

Cheque or Money Order payable to:

Assoc. of Friends of Botanic Gardens Inc

Post to: The Treasurer, PO Box 983, Geelong,

Vic. 3220

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Editor Anne Rawson

email: campsis@friendsanbg.org.au

We welcome your articles and photographs

and important calendar events for inclusion

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

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Connecting Friends for 20 years (continued)

This succession and conference process continued with Brian Chandler (Benalla), Max Pawsey (Wilson Botanic Park), the late John Harper (RBG Melbourne), Yvonne Mills (Mildura), Marie Ziebell (Warrnambool), Jeff Gates (Albury), Jayne Salmon (Geelong), Joan Garner (Ballarat), Pauline Wickstead (Canberra 2004), Alex Smart (RBG Cranbourne 2006), Janet Thomson (RBG Melbourne) and finally to our current President Geraldine Davis (Port Augusta), re-adopting to the previous succession process. The 2008 and 2010 conferences were hosted by Orange followed by Mildura.

Newsletter

From the first edition of *Campsis* in October 1993, Secretary Laurence Cohn writes:

It was one of my daughters who suggested the name Campsis for a publication that is intended to trumpet to all the Members the news they want their fellow Members to hear. The drawing beside the name is that of Campsis radicans, the nature of which seems appropriate to an association that hopes its roots will go in all directions.



Campsis radicans Trumpet Flower Beverley
Graham 1994

Edited by Laurence, with typing and copying by the Melbourne Friends, *Campsis* continued for the next 11 years. Then in 2005 the format was updated and content improved. Members' photographs were included and electronic distribution introduced. Committee then followed with a new website, and a new coloured logo and format in 2011, with a new editor, Anne Rawson from ANBG Canberra. Over the years the articles from members have been inspiring, increasing markedly both in number and quality and revealing the challenges and degree of commitment Friends are prepared to make.

Connecting Friends for 20 years (continued)

Committee and Membership

Early Committee minutes are quite enlightening and demonstrate members' vision and belief in the importance of Botanic Gardens, which continues today. Even in 1994, AFBG members were looking to RBG Melbourne to create a Project Officer position to support struggling regional gardens in Victoria, most of which were without curatorial expertise and some still are. Subsequent letters to RBG Melbourne confirmed that no funds were available, but at a later informal meeting of some Victorian Botanic Garden managers, a national association of Botanic Gardens was proposed, however a less formal Victorian arrangement evolved to enable gardens to share expertise. Today we have the national and state gardens management networks of BGANZ, with regular study days, seminars and conferences.



AFBG Committee in Albury NSW 2009



North Coast Regional BG



Geelong BG in 2006

Interesting to note are the Association's early letters of advocacy for members:

The threat of an Optus tower in Wombat Hill Botanic Gardens, Daylesford; loss of a section of Port Fairy Botanic Gardens to a camping ground and road; and proposed Bullarto Road extension through the northern section of RBG Cranbourne. Perhaps we contributed to preventing these actions?

The 1995 committee suggested the development of an Information Kit to assist the formation of new Friends groups. This finally eventuated in 2006 following a questionnaire sent to members. Committee had also actively pursued the idea of a collective Public Liability Insurance for AFBG members, however this concept proved far too complicated for Insurance companies.

In 1996 RBG Melbourne again raised the idea of an international Friends conference, however the Melbourne Friends were less enthusiastic and the Association determined it was outside their remit.

Following the Geelong conference (1994), Adelaide, Canberra and Sydney Friends requested AFBG (Vic) membership be widened to enable them to join. A national association was then discussed or the development of state associations of Friends groups. Eventually in 1999 membership rules included Friends within 50 kms of the Victorian border and Associate membership for others beyond that, acquiring seven more members in the process. It was in 2001 that AFBG dropped (Vic) to become a national association and continued to expand.

Beginning with 18 members in 1993, the Association grew to 35 members by 2004, reaching 55 members in 2012 and adding two international affiliates. Associate Membership with BGANZ followed in 2007 connecting AFBG with the gardens management group. A Memorandum of Understanding was created in 2013.

Finally, we should acknowledge the valuable support of all Committee representatives and particularly long term commitment: Laurence Cohn, recently deceased (13 years), Janet Thomson and David Baumgartner (13 years), Jayne Salmon and Joan Garner (11 years), Alex Smart and Annie McGeachy (nine years ongoing) and Mandy King (eight years). Their contribution to the Association has been commendable.

Over time, there have been a few occasions when our future and continuing viability seemed doubtful regardless of our efforts. However, with the recent restructure, our membership still growing, and our connection with BGANZ, we look forward to perhaps another 20 years.

Annie McGeachy, Secretary

AFBG Conferences - remaining relevant

Year	Friends of	Theme
1993	Ballarat Botanical Gardens	What are Friends For?
1994	Geelong Botanic Gardens	Growing Together Towards 2000
1995	Benalla Botanical Gardens	
1996	Wilson Botanic Park, Berwick	The Evolving of Botanic Gardens
1997	Royal Botanic Gardens Melbourne	Conservation, Collections & Community
1998	Australian Inland Botanic Gardens, Mildura	Mallee Magics Contribution to the next Millenium
1999	Warrnambool Botanic Gardens	
2000	Albury Botanic Gardens	2000 & Beyond
2001	Geelong Botanic Gardens	Bunce, Bunyas & Beyond
2002	Ballarat Botanical Gardens, with Castlemaine, Buninyong & Wombat Hill	Living Gardens, Gardens for Life
2004	Australian National Botanic Gardens, Canberra	Gardens for Pleasure, Plants for Survival
2006	Royal Botanic Gardens Cranbourne	Our Role in Evolution, Ecology & Environment
2008	Orange Botanic Gardens	The Botanic Garden - Where Passion Bears Fruit
2010	Australian Inland Botanic Gardens, Mildura	Secrets of the Mallee
2012	Australian Arid Lands Botanic Garden, Pt Augusta	Mangroves, Myalls & More

The 2014 Conference 'Growing Matters...Growing Gardens, Growing Friends' will be hosted by Friends of Gold Coast Regional Botanic Gardens. Refer to page 13 and for more information as it develops go to: www.friendsbotanicgardens.org

Congratulations!

from the Friends of the Ballarat Botanical Gardens

The Friends of the Ballarat Botanical Gardens (FBBG) congratulate the Association of Friends of Botanical Gardens (AFBG) on reaching its milestone of 20 years. Ballarat's involvement with the Association has been a richly beneficial one of mentoring, friendship and the dissemination of information and ideas. FBBG has had a constant and rewarding presence on the AFBG Committee, with Joan Garner, Raoul Dixon, Judith Bailey and Elizabeth Gilfillan holding major roles in the affairs of the Association.



Program for the first conference held in Ballarat in 1993

FBBG hosted the inaugural AFBG Conference in April 1993 and is one of a few Victorian Friends groups that have hosted two AFBG conferences. FBBG's second conference was in 2002 and a collaboration in the best sense of the word, with the Friends of Castlemaine, Wombat Hill at Daylesford and Buninyong Botanic Gardens joining with Ballarat to organise this event.

Conference delegates enjoyed a rare opportunity to be bussed to this quartet of the best Victorian era botanic gardens with the wonderfully researched anecdotes of John Hawker to enlighten their experience.

The Conference theme was: 'What are Friends For'? It was opened by the late Sir Rupert Hamer, President of Friends of RBG Melbourne. The keynote speaker, John Wrigley, former Director of National Botanic Garden Canberra, spoke on 'The value of botanic gardens to the community'. Other speakers included John Patrick, Lecturer in Horticulture at VCAH Burnley, author, media personality, and Board member RBG Melbourne; Philip Mountain, Professional Consultant; and Peter Lumley, former Government Botanist. Other subjects covered included 'A consumer's guide to horticultural service for botanic gardens' and 'How the National Ornamental Plant Collection Scheme can help promote regional gardens.'

The Association has also provided a conduit to the experiences of other Friends groups as each developed their sub-groups. It has been a two-way street as other Friends groups sought the advice of FBBG. Our guiding, education, and growing groups have all received and provided invaluable advice. This stands as testament to the effectiveness of the AFBG, both nationally and internationally.

Well done, and may the good work continue.

*Lorraine Powell (History Group Convenor FBBG) in conjunction with
Michael Bird (Friends of the Ballarat Botanical Gardens)*

From the President

Geraldine Davis



Since the last *Campsis* report, the AGM of the Association of Friends of Botanic Gardens was proudly hosted by Friends of Melton Botanic Gardens, one of the very recently formed gardens in Victoria, given its long history of the early establishment of botanic gardens. It was a pleasure to be shown around their Gardens and observe how proud the Friends were of their Gardens' progress, as well as their plans for the future.

Following the AGM, it is with pleasure that the AFBG executive welcomed new committee members, Patricia O'Shea, representing Friends of Wombat Hill Botanic Gardens, Daylesford, Vic. and John Bentley, representing Friends of Melton Botanic Gardens, Vic. The Committee currently has members from South Australia (2), ACT (1), Victoria (6), and Queensland (2).

MoU between BGANZ and AFBG: I wish to acknowledge the efforts of the executive of both associations on their efforts to achieve a smooth transition towards the finalising of the Memorandum of Understanding. This agreement identifies the parallel nature of our organisations in the pursuit of closely related goals, the opportunities for sharing resources and participation in related study days, seminars or conferences. We look forward to greater interaction in the future.

The 6th BGANZ and 5th Botanic Gardens Conservation International (BGCI) Joint Congress 'Celebrating Success' took place on 20-25 October 2013 in Dunedin NZ. See article by Annie McGeachy on page 8 and: www.bganz.org.au.

It was noted at our last Committee meeting that our 1993 membership subscription was \$25 and it was now time for a realistic review of fees, better reflecting the ability of our members to meet their expenses. The Committee agreed to amend the annual subscription fees, as shown on page 2, and introduce a five-tier payment scheme. Fees are not due until 31 March 2014 when you will be able to make an electronic funds transfer, which is becoming more popular than sending a cheque these days.

Next year the AFBG biennial conference with the theme: 'Growing Matters...Growing Friends, Growing Gardens' will be held from 8-10 August 2014 at the Gold Coast, Queensland, hosted by Friends of Gold Coast Regional Botanic Gardens. For more details see page 13 and: www.friendsbotanicgardens.org.

The executive of AFBG continue to explore avenues for the AFBG to be registered as a Tax Deductible gift Recipient, however as yet there is no clear path forward given the nature of AFBG's structure. It is worth noting several Friends groups around Australia are also attempting to achieve a similar status for their organisations and it is pleasing to note that our Executive and previously successful members have responded to other members' enquiries with helpful information.

I look forward to meeting many of you at next year's biennial conference on 8-10 August at the Gold Coast Regional Botanic Gardens.

Geraldine Davis, President

Secretary's Report

Annie McGeachy



Like all incorporated Victorian members this year, the Association was required to comply with the 2012 *Associations Incorporation Act*. AFBG's new Rules have been approved by Consumer Affairs and are now available on the website. I trust other members have also completed this somewhat tedious task.

The completed AFBG/BGANZ Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) will also be available on the website.

We are pleased to reveal that it is the Hanbury Foundation that has generously committed \$10,000 a year to assist the Association's operation for the next five years. AFBG Committee is profoundly grateful. Given that Hamilton, Victoria, is the Foundation's base, one stipulation is that the Hamilton Botanic Gardens are to be funded for provision of much needed plant labels. This project is in train, with the support of Hamilton Friends and Ballarat Friends' label-making machine, substantially reducing the production costs.

I thoroughly enjoyed a recent visit to the Cairns Botanic Gardens (which includes the Flecker Garden), in spite of my relative ignorance regarding much of the lush tropical flora. Visiting the Friends building, I heard of their impressive achievements and encouraged them to join the Association!

Also managed to visit the Canberra Arboretum, that had grown somewhat. The new 'Village' visitor center is a stunning spacious, airy building, also affording wonderful views across the valley and the children's playground is very exciting. Noted the young dragon trees (*Dracaena draco*) had needed some covering to prevent cockatoo attack on the new crown leaves. Finally managed a stroll in the soft silence of the Cork Oak (*Quercus suber*) forest, established nearly 100 years ago. Last harvested in 2005. A perfect picnic spot.

Finally, a trip with the Geelong Friends to the Melbourne University Systems Garden where gardens staff explained the 19th century origins, when the University had about 30 students and the garden covered a quarter of the grounds.



The gazebo was once the central structure of an octagonal glass house in the middle of the garden.
Photo: A. McGeachy

Administrative Officer's Report

Ro Noone



Ro Noone with Joan Cordell, President, Friends of Noosa Botanic Gardens

Dear Members

First of all, thank you to all those members who have passed on their *Campsis* for distribution. Your 'inspiration and information' is certainly worth sharing amongst the Association.

Many of you will know of Friends groups who are not members of the AFBG. Others may be aware of fledgling groups needing assistance to get up and running. I have recently updated the AFBG brochure which includes an outline of the Association, benefits of membership and a membership application form. If you would like hard copies of this, please let me know. Alternatively, you can download it from our website.

Since the May edition of *Campsis*, I have enjoyed visiting three members' Gardens: Melton Botanic Gardens (Vic), Burnley Gardens (Vic), and Noosa Botanic Gardens (Qld).

The Friends of Melton BG formed in 2003. A relatively young garden, Melton BG has a comprehensive Master Plan. Members can belong to regular activity groups: *Gumnuts*, who work in the Eucalyptus Arboretum; *Lakers*, who are creating a beautiful area for picnickers and walkers around an existing wetland; and *Creekers*, who are rejuvenating Ryans Creek with indigenous vegetation. Our AGM was held in their 'posh shed' where generous Friends provided us with delicious hot soups, sandwiches and sweets, followed by a guided tour. President, John Bentley, is a current AFBG Committee member. He was thrilled to report in July that Friends of Melton BG won the 'Community Action and Leadership Award' at the Keep Australia Beautiful Victoria Sustainable Cities Awards.

The University of Melbourne's School of Land & Environment at Burnley Campus held its Open Day on 14 July and offered visitors a full program of workshops, walkshops and lectures. Friends of Burnley Gardens provided plant sales, merchandise, fresh food, registration, direction and general support for this very successful event. It was lovely to meet two very busy Friends on the day, Jan Chamberlain and Sandra McMahon. Keep an eye out for Burnley Open Day next year. Leave plenty of time to enjoy the historic Burnley Gardens while you are there.

Noosa BG is located at Cooroy, about 20 minutes' drive from Noosa Heads. It features tropical and subtropical plants from Australia and overseas, with beautifully positioned garden 'rooms' which offer seclusion, shelter and magnificent views. The Friends have an enthusiastic garden maintenance team led by volunteer Joan Challenger. They work under the guidance of the Gardens' Botanist, Dr Seonaid Melville. They also support arts and music programs and assist with performances in a Grecian-inspired amphitheatre overlooking the stunning Lake Macdonald. President, Joan Cordell, arranged a sumptuous morning tea for my family and me and took us on a most enjoyable tour. Friends of Noosa BG are currently exploring the attainability of tax-deductible status. If you are heading to the Sunshine Coast, I highly recommend you include these beautiful gardens in your itinerary.

While AFBG is celebrating its 20 anniversary, a number of Friends groups are marking special milestones this year. Congratulations to all of you for your ongoing commitment to promoting natural science and beauty in your region.

Fifth Global Botanic Gardens Congress

Celebrating Success: the Influence and Appeal of Botanic Gardens Dunedin, New Zealand

Held in the recently refurbished Dunedin Centre, from 20-25 October, the Congress was an outstanding success, drawing 347 delegates from 45 countries, including China, South East Asia, Europe, US and Canada, Russia, Azerbaijan, Republic of Korea, Nigeria, Ethiopia, Jordan, Oman, Mexico, Mauritius and Tonga. For Australian Botanic Gardens delegates this was a once only opportunity.

The congress combined the 5th BGC (Botanic Gardens Conservation International) Global Botanic Gardens Congress with the 6th BGANZ Biennial Congress and the celebration of the 150th anniversary of the Dunedin Botanic Gardens.



View from Lanarch Castle Gardens Dunedin.

The Congress themes were:

- Success globally—progress and achievements in plant conservation around the world
- Beyond the garden walls—social engagement, involving our communities
- Horticultural changes—are we able to meet the challenges and opportunities facing botanic gardens
- Science and innovation—using resources to develop new solutions in a changing world.

A Mihi Whakatau or welcome by Maori leader, Huata Holmes, likened delegates to a Maori story of birds collecting messages and taking them across the world. Delegates were also welcomed by Baroness Walmsley, Chair of Botanic Gardens Conservation International (BCGI), and Alan Matchett, Curator of Dunedin Botanic Gardens.

Over four days there were 17 plenary speakers, and over 100 presentations in parallel symposia. The depth and breadth of subjects and quality of the speakers and the conference program was extraordinary, and also somewhat daunting, making subject selection very challenging.

Wednesday we had a day off! In sunny weather we toured the lush spectacular Otago Peninsula, visiting Lanarch House extraordinary garden, the Albatross Colony, the 307 hectare Orokonui Ecosanctuary and a local wetland. Thursday saw an excellent dinner and evening at the Dunedin Town Hall. Drummed-in by the O-Taiko Drumming Ensemble we were further entertained by the essential Dunedin Pipers and a superb presentation of Maori song by a winning group of Dunedin High School students. After dinner there was much vigorous dancing!

Photo by Craig Baxter



Given the complexity of the Congress I have selected a snapshot only: the global perspective, and a few quite remarkable conservation projects 'outside the garden walls'.

Botanic Gardens Conservation International (BGCI)

Founded in 1987, BGCI is the respected international voice linking botanic gardens globally in the development of strategies for biodiversity conservation. BGCI networks include:

- The Global Strategy for Plant Conservation (GSPC) Target 8 of GSPC strategy is: 'to have at least 75 per cent of the world's threatened species in *ex situ* collections by 2020, preferably in their country of origin and at least 20 per cent available for recovery and restoration plans. The strategy aims to halt the continuing loss of plant diversity. New initiatives in the BGCI 2013-18 plan include focusing on ecological restoration, monitoring invasive pests and diseases and broadening the social agenda.
- GardenSearch, a publicly accessible database, provides information on over 3000 gardens, identifying the collective conservation and research resources available within the garden community.
- PlantSearch is the only global database of plants in cultivation in botanic gardens with links to global and national Red Lists and other relevant data, with the capacity to identify the plant diversity maintained in botanic gardens. Two new BGCI initiatives launched in Dunedin:
 - An International Plant Sentinel Network is being established as part of a European-funded project in collaboration with BGCI. The project will make use of the 1,000,000 records in the PlantSearch database and activities provide early warning of emerging plant pests and diseases.
 - Ecological Restoration Alliance of Botanic Gardens. In response to the United Nations target of restoring 15 percent of the world's damaged ecosystems by 2020, the Alliance has set an ambitious goal to restore 100 degraded ecosystems which include tropical rainforests, temperate woodlands, grasslands, Mediterranean scrub, beaches and wetlands.

International Botanic Garden Projects

Oman - Muscat

A bold visionary 420 hectare Botanic Garden, funded by the Sultanate of Oman, on the Arabian Peninsula is under construction. The aim is to present the total native Arabian flora in eight naturalistic habitats, ranging from endemic deciduous cloud forests and sand and gravel deserts to high-montane Juniper woodlands, with related climatic zones provided in three large biomes. With temperatures ranging to 50°C the project will provide innovative scientific, architectural design and engineering solutions based on sustainable principles. All plants first have had to be found, and thousands are currently being propagated. The Horticultural and Living Collections team from the Garden also rescue mature trees (especially frankincense) otherwise doomed by major infrastructure developments. Using essentially brutal methods, they have collected over 1750 trees transported them some 1000 kms to a satellite nursery in Sallalah prior to translocation to the Garden.

Given 50 per cent of Oman's population is under 18 years of age, such a large project, which provides an authentic environment, inspires research, science, exploration, discovery and education and demonstrates a proud cultural history, is critical.

Vietnam - Mangrove restoration

A project carried out by the Delft Botanic Gardens University of Technology in the Netherlands, in conjunction with local population, is using a simple economical and practical method of rehabilitating mangroves affected by Saigon and Mekong Rivers. The Delft Botanic Garden has developed the concept of 'Building with Nature' using plants to successfully modify wave-pattern and stabilise coastal dunes, to better tolerate rising water levels and improve water quality.

The work has been adapted to mangrove forests, calculating the minimum area and density of mangrove forest needed to break up waves, tidal waves and torrents, using rows of 'sticks' to break wave action and reduce soil loss before planting new mangroves. Introducing these simpler management methods is more likely to enable communities to undertake mangrove restoration.

Hawaii - Breadfruit

The high yielding Breadfruit tree *Artocarpus altilis*, or ulu to Hawaiians, has sustained Pacific cultures over thousands of years and hundreds of varieties have been identified throughout the Pacific.

Over the last 40 years the National Tropical Botanic Garden (NTBG) in Hawaii has assembled the world's largest collection as one of its *ex situ* conservation projects. They have now developed the knowledge and protocols that will allow Breadfruit to be used globally to address food security and widespread hunger. Pilot projects have been planted in Hawaii, Central America, Caribbean and Africa, with a goal of planting one million trees in the next 10 years. These projects also provide economic opportunities for the communities. Perhaps Sir Joseph Banks' 18th century vision has been realised, although his focus was more about producing food for plantation slaves!

Vladivostok, Russia

The Vladivostok Botanical Institute has undertaken detailed mapping of the varying plant climatic regions across the continuous permafrost in northern Asia where active soil levels are minimal and the evolved adaptations of the flora and crop species hold unique genetic diversity. Such information will be critical to their conservation in the face of any rapid climate change.

Jordan - Community-based Rangeland Rehabilitation Project

'A key premise in the Royal Botanic Gardens approach to biodiversity conservation is to recognise and embrace *humans* as one of the dominant species in the ecosystem.'

Established in 2005 the RBG identified food security as a major challenge facing Jordan, given the over-grazing, desertification and the increasing population. The Gardens established a 180 hectare project at the Gardens in 2007. Given the Bedouin had traditional use of the unfenced rangeland for 1000 years, engaging the community in a participatory approach was critical. Starting with five participating families living near the RBG site in 2007, this increased to 38 families by 2013.

To counter local opposition livestock owners were supplied with replacement forage, in return for them withdrawing their flocks. This enabled rangeland vegetation and biomass to be gradually assessed and managed, stocking rates and grazing plans and flock management introduced, improving vegetation and biodiversity by 30 per cent in three years and critically, the health of grazing stock. Livestock owners are now reaping the benefits from the reviving ecosystem and policing themselves and others to sustain it. Families have also learned alternative income sources, including from bee products, mushrooms, dried yoghurt and handicraft skills, thereby gradually improving the livelihood and general health of the community.

This remarkable multifaceted approach to the project by the RBG Jordan provided communities with the fundamental keys to their food security.

Korean Demilitarised Zone (DMZ) – potential impact of a botanic garden

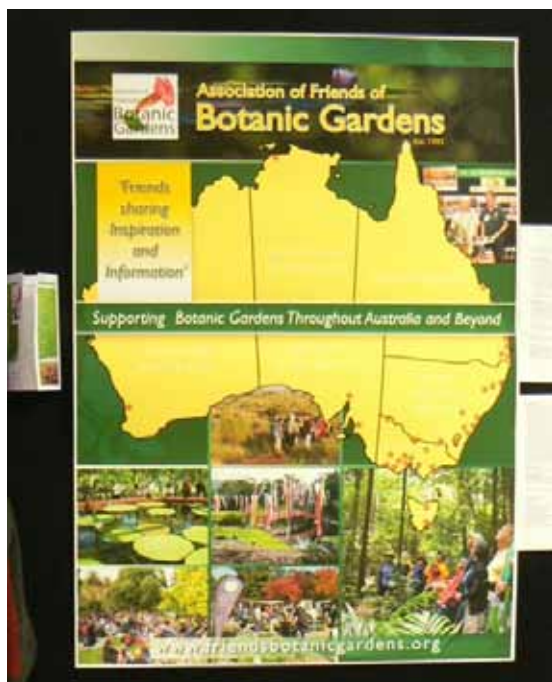
The 60th anniversary of the Korean War Armistice is this year. The Armistice produced the DMZ, an area 4 kms wide and 248 kms long that is a buffer between the North and South and, unlike its name, remains heavily fortified. In the south an adjacent area called the Civilian Control Zone (CCZ) was created for military bases and farming.

These two zones represent Korean eco systems, including wetlands, grasslands, mountainous highlands forest to coastal ecosystems, containing extensive wildlife and possibly 3,000 flora and fauna species. Closed off for 60 years, the DMZ has become a wild refuge and is botanically exciting, and such a project would be extraordinary. A previous master plan that also included science, environmental and conservation principles, has been unearthed. Conversely, much of CCZ, which is no longer used by the military, is badly degraded or deserted, and farming relies on pesticides. The challenges are enormous and rely on political agreement.

Horticulturalists—are they a threatened species?

Dr David Rae, Director of Horticulture RBG Edinburgh, expressed concern that over the last 30 years he had witnessed a general decline in horticultural staff numbers and standards as botanic gardens responded to pressure of corporate and commercial needs. He also felt that poor wages, poor job profile and career structure is limiting the numbers enrolling in horticultural courses, affecting the quality of horticultural staff available to maintain gardens and collections and the ability to support research and education.

Is there a lesson here for us? Do our regional botanic gardens suffer this? Is horticulture promoted by committed professionals as fundamental to conservation and securing biodiversity, to public education and as being at the core of botanic gardens? Is the quality of our horticulture courses high enough and are our people valued?



BGANZ—our own region

Many other papers were presented by RBG Melbourne and Cranbourne, Sydney, ANBG Canberra, Hobart, Adelaide, Gold Coast, Dubbo, Williamstown, Wollongong, Wilson Botanic Park and of course New Zealand. At the BGANZ AGM in Dunedin on 25 October retiring President Anne Duncan was thanked for her considerable efforts in guiding BGANZ, given her challenging task following the retirement of founding President Dr Philip Moors. Anne is replaced by incoming President Dale Arvidsson from Mackay Botanic Gardens Queensland.

Botanic Gardens Collections Data Base

BGANZ is currently developing a Tool-kit for Plant Collection Records. This will be in the form of adaptable user-friendly software to assist regional botanic gardens to record and access their plant collection records accurately and easily. Great news for our regional gardens.

New agenda for botanic gardens

In his closing address, Peter Wyse-Jackson, President of the Missouri Botanical Garden, and one of the world's foremost and best known botanists and plant conservationists, outlined the recent successes of botanic gardens and the challenges for them in the future.

Worldwide there are now over 3000 botanic gardens known in 175 countries and of those, less than 750 were established prior to 1950. South America now has 200 and 20 African countries with one garden each. There is now a complete world network at the global, national and regional levels created in the last two years.

The role of botanic gardens has been reinvented over the last 30 years, replacing mainly science, research and living collections and public amenities with limited educational roles. The gardens are multi-purpose botani-

cal resource centres serving cities, countries and the world through global strategies to conserve threatened plant species. He highlighted the importance of expanding plant conservation and environmental education through botanic gardens, and the increasingly influential role of botanic gardens in the development of international policies in biodiversity conservation.

Finally

Throughout the Congress the mood was vibrant with a constant buzz as delegates took advantage of connecting and sharing with national and international counterparts. The message that botanic gardens need to be multi-purpose as well as working 'outside the garden wall' was apparent in many presentations.

In closing the Congress Friday lunch time, incoming Chair of BGCI, Professor Stephen Blackmore, Regius Keeper and Queen's Botanist RBG Edinburgh, confirmed the 'best ever' BGCI Congress and Alan Matchett and his team were given a standing ovation. Then, in the words of Huatu Holmes 'the birds flew off with their messages' across the world.

I acknowledge with thanks the generous support of BGANZ Council and the assistance from AFBG Committee for my attendance at this 'best ever' congress. Thank you to the AFBG members who at the speed of light responded with photos for the poster.

An event such as this illuminates the extraordinary achievements and targets of BGCI and botanic gardens globally, leaving the feeling that this is where the real work on mitigating climate change, securing biodiversity and food security is quietly taking place. Australia is well represented in this club.

Having managed only a short visit to Dunedin's outstanding Botanic Gardens, the discovery of a favourite, the handkerchief tree, *Davidia involcrata* in full splendor among the 'flaming' rhododendrons provided some consolation.

Annie McGeachy, Secretary AFBG

Guiding for the Future

A report on Australasian Conference of Volunteer Guides Christchurch, New Zealand

In October I attended the Australasian Conference of Volunteer Guides in Botanic Gardens, held bravely in still very tattered Christchurch. Luckily the weather was good for the 114 delegates who attended. The theme was 'Guiding for the Future'. We had very good speakers: botanists, scientists, educationalists, ecology and bio-security officers. The lectures on custom border quarantine control worldwide were amazing, as was the talk on conservation and sustainability. There were also breakout sessions and walks in the beautiful Christchurch Botanic Gardens, now celebrating 150 years.

Dr John Clemens, a scientist, and curator for the past four years, believes that botanic gardens today are for the well being of people, as much as for the preservation of plants and curated information.

Lynda Burns, who specialises in educational skills, asks how can we improve the visitor experience? A survey reveals 50 percent of visitors are interested in plants, and only 10 per cent of these in horticulture. The remaining 50 per cent are recreational visitors who attend gardens to find peace, for interaction with family and friends, etc. Therefore, gardens should be enhancing, not overwhelming.

Guides also should enhance a visitor's time in our gardens without being dominating. It was suggested guides should always ask visitors what they would like to see, or what their interests are, and then we should try to entwine the information we give to include what they are interested in. We should not just expound on every plant or feature we pass (and what enthusiastic guide has not been guilty of this?), or they will 'switch off' and therefore not particularly enjoy the guided walk. It takes a clever guide to keep the interest of a large mixed group!

Several ideas were suggested about how to encourage family participation. Edible gardens were popular, as were drop-in workshops where one 'grabs' visitors to show them something in 15 to 20 minutes: gardening techniques workshops, and self-guided school holiday family tours in little booklets have also been effective. It was suggested we try to engage garden staff as educators if possible. For example, Edinburgh Botanic Gardens has set up an eight-day basic horticultural techniques course.

It was also widely believed that the use of mobile technology was going to help in the future, using smart phones to impart information at certain points in the garden. Some participants have found Facebook is best to engage people who are not in the gardens, and in Christchurch the Botanic Gardens site is just part of the city council's Facebook.

A successful online Velco learning technique is to combine information with knowledge your visitors already have. With Velco, the training of a Guide is approached as a triangle, one corner representing



Guiding on water. Photo by Bridget Gubbins

attitude, beliefs and values, another corner knowledge, and the third corner guiding skills. While too much information may 'spoil the flavour', anyone who would like to look up this idea of learning online may do so at: www.vark-learn.com

Many more points of interest were discussed, and I came away full of enthusiasm for our own Geelong Botanic Gardens and the role we can all play to promote them for everyone's enjoyment.

Bridget Gubbins, Geelong BG.

Come to the 2014 AFBG Conference!

Growing Matters...Growing Gardens, Growing Friends



Friends of Gold Coast Regional Botanic Gardens are excited to host the AFBG conference from 8-10 August 2014. We look forward to welcoming delegates from the more than 50 member groups of the Association from botanic gardens within Australia, as well as two from overseas.

As the first AFBG Conference to be held in Queensland, we aim to attract delegates to the Gold Coast with our stunning *Sprinter* weather. We are privileged that Professor Tim Entwisle, who coined the term *Sprinter* in 2010 to describe the early native spring flowering season, will be our keynote speaker. Well known for his engaging presentations, Tim is the Director and Chief Executive of the Royal Botanic Gardens Melbourne, formerly Director of Conservation, Living Collections and Estates at Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, and Executive Director, Botanic Gardens Trust, Sydney.

There are great venue facilities at the Mercure Gold Coast Resort, situated away from the hustle and bustle of our popular tourist city. Our wonderful Gold Coast Regional Botanic Gardens are minutes away by car, and a willing contingent of Gold Coast Friends will be on hand as super friendly hosts!

The theme of the conference is '*Growing Matters...Growing Gardens, Growing Friends*'.

There is an invitation for Presentation Papers and already a number of interesting and motivating guest speakers have agreed to present enlightening topics. These include: conserving regional plant species; using technology to aid in plant identification; effective and engaging public; children's and vocational education programs; and attracting new volunteer participation in botanic gardens. We want this conference to inspire delegates to continue to 'grow' their Gardens and their Friends.

The 'Welcome Cocktail Drinks' on Friday evening and the 'Conference Dinner' on Saturday evening will give delegates the opportunity to meet up with 'old' Friends and make new Friends from other botanic gardens. Entertainment with a 'twist' will keep you on your toes on Saturday night...but it's not a dinner dance!

Options for pre- and post-conference full-day tours to the stunning Gold Coast Region and Scenic Rim:

- Tamborine Mountain, famous for its beautiful botanic garden, lush private gardens and a number of national parks, including the first dedicated in Queensland
- Binna Burra in the World Heritage-listed Lamington National Park with extensive views and guided walks outlining the history and vegetation of this important Gondwana rainforest area
- Burleigh Heads National Park, an example of an intact rocky headland with lowland rainforest/Notophyll Vine Forest, and steeped in Aboriginal history. Then the International award winning sustainable community 'Currumbin Ecovillage'.

Why not register your interest in attending by emailing: secretary@friendsgcrbg.org.au. 'Early Bird' Registration will open later this year.

Rana Baguley, AFBG 2014 Conference Convenor

The day the Red Centre came to Canberra

*Friends of the Australian National Botanic Gardens
Canberra, ACT*



Photo: Peter Byron

On 31 October 2013, a gorgeous spring day, Senator Simon Birmingham, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for the Environment, opened the new Red Centre Garden at the Australian National Botanic Gardens in Canberra. Following a welcome to country and smoking ceremony by Aunty Janet (Ngunnawal Elder), Dr Judy West, Executive Director of the ANBG introduced the Senator to an audience that included ANBG and departmental staff and many Friends.

As the *Canberra Times* later reported, the Minister described the Garden as a great representation of the Australian outback right here in the bush capital and spoke of the unique sense visitors would have in twelve months of being on a trek through Central Australia itself, while standing at the foot of Black Mountain.

The new Garden, three years in the planning, is designed to showcase the iconic significance of Australia's Red Centre as the physical and spiritual heart of Australia. The Garden incorporates:

- sand plains and dunes, rocky escarpments, rocky outcrops, desert rivers, sand dune country and chenopod shrub land
- interpretative signs about 'Boom and Bust' to help visitors understand the way in which plants, animals and people have adapted to and survived the region's highly variable rainfall
- imported, authentic landscaping materials
- plants selected to represent iconic and dominant flora from Central Australia.

The Garden accordingly includes mulga, desert oaks, ghost gum woodlands, spinifex grassland and saltbush scrub. Not surprisingly, one key element in selecting the plants has been their likely ability to cope with Canberra's at times formidable winters. The design includes an interpretative hub and also a desert discovery trail that uses Red Centre animals to interest children in the region's plants and ecology.

A major feature is the Pavement Artwork, funded by the Friends of the ANBG. This is the work of indigenous artist, Teresa Purla McKeeman. Born in 1954, Teresa lives and paints in the traditional country of her mother and grandmother on the outstation at Atnwengerrp, 40 kms from the central Utopian or Alywarr community at Ampilatwatja in the Northern Territory.

In 2012 Teresa was commissioned by the Gardens to work with Pamille Berg Consulting Ltd and Gardens staff to evolve a selected portion of one of her paintings into the pavement design for this Garden. Teresa has explained that this painting 'is about the ceremonial dancing, but only the women can attend these ceremonies, performing sacred dance and songs... This painting represents the dance tracks that are left by the women.' Teresa visited Canberra in late 2012 to discuss and approve fabrication materials and finalise the design. She was also present for the opening.

Lesley Jackman

Ballarat heritage weekend

*Friends of Ballarat Botanical Gardens
Ballarat, Victoria*



Some recent PMs admiring the begonias

The theme for the weekend was entertainment and we became aware how so many of our historical leisure activities have been forgotten since the Gardens were opened in 1859. So we invited the community to promenade with the guides on an exploring tour to find out where the maze and the zoo were. Where you would get hot water for your picnic tea? What were swing boats? What was a penny arcade? Where did they have races for the Sunday school picnics and so on? Some remnants of the zoo remain but for many of these entertainment features of the past we rely on our historical records. They show the many efforts to create a menagerie to attract people to the new Gardens; European birds and squirrels were introduced into the Gardens. Stories were shared of when the first task for the gardener, each Sunday, was to tie up the maypole and swings to prevent any children using them on the Sabbath day. Photographers paid a licence fee to take photographs then, and an inspector was employed to regulate cyclists and to fine reckless riders. We also observed that some leisure activities don't change, such as having fun feeding the swans or sitting astride the lions at the entrance.

The Guides have produced new brochures—*Statues of the Ballarat Botanical Gardens* and *Significant Trees of the BBG*—and have also produced a brochure on the Prime Ministers Avenue, but its printing was delayed until events in Canberra were more settled. The existence of this Ballarat icon is due to the vision and generosity of Richard Crouch, who went to Mt. Pleasant School in Ballarat and went on to become the youngest member in the first Parliament after Federation. He sat alongside Deakin and Barton, and was so impressed by their leadership that he left a bequest to start this avenue of PM busts which was opened in 1940. With 27 commissioned busts and four different sculptors there is variation in the approach used. Barton had been dead for 20 years when Wallace Anderson was commissioned for the job and he only had photos to use. There was not the same media inundation of different glimpses of the PM as Peter Nicholson had access to as he pondered how to shape the bust of Julia Gillard. He has cartoons, media clippings and a live sitting. Nicholson's approach has been to impart an expression of the character of the individual and so his busts generally engage more comment.

Any time is a good time to stroll down this magnificent avenue. In winter the trees are more exposed which emphasises their grandeur; in spring the horse chestnuts are in full flower; in summer the shade of the Turkey Oak is appreciated, and the mass bedding plants are at their best in early autumn. Enjoy these and other garden vistas while you ponder on our PMs.

This year the guides deviated from their usual hour-long guiding sessions around the Gardens and offered a class to Ballarat U3A. Two hour sessions were held over six mornings in April and May. Strong positive feedback was received and it will be run again but, is to be extended to eight sessions in 2014.

Terry O'Brien, Guiding Group Convenor FBBG.

A front row seat!

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



Foundation & Friends have been busy with our most eventful spring yet! From exhibition openings and project launches, to walks and talks and tours, our members and volunteers have been exploring a wonderful range of things.

On 11 October the Australian PlantBank, at the Australian Botanic Garden, Mount Annan was officially opened by Her Excellency Professor Marie Bashir AC CVO, Governor of NSW. One of the most significant projects in the history of the Gardens, PlantBank will be an international centre for plant research and learning, incorporating the largest native plant conservation seedbank in Australia. The Honourable Robin Parker MP, Minister for the Environment, said the facility would ensure Australian flora would be preserved for future generations. We would like to congratulate everyone who was involved with the project and also thank our members and supporters. Their generosity and enthusiasm helped make this project a reality.

Now in its 13th year, our annual *Artisans in the Gardens* exhibition featured collaborations with over 50 of Australia's finest established and emerging artists and craftspeople. Held in the Royal Botanic Garden, this stunning showcase of contemporary arts and crafts wowed visitors and critics, creating a strong conceptual dialogue between the viewer and nature. As part of the exhibition we also launched our inaugural *Artisans Sculpture Walk*, featuring 12 diverse, contemporary works, paying homage to the intrinsic beauty of the natural world while addressing environmental and botanical issues.

With one of the best seats in the house the Gardens were inundated with visitors for the International Fleet Review, the centenary of the first entry of the Royal Australian Navy into Sydney Harbour in 1913. The Review featured aerial displays, gun salutes, band performances, races and a spectacular evening pyrotechnic and light show. Foundation & Friends volunteers manned information booths and helped host an exclusive members' picnic in the Garden with front row seats to this historic event. It was a great night with everyone enjoying delicious picnics as the spectacle unfolded on the harbour, in the sky and across the Sydney Opera House.

This November we held our first AGM as Foundation & Friends; since the merger last year we have gone from strength to strength. We have seen a wonderful growth in membership and volunteering. The merger was also a step forward in enabling the fundraising efforts of Foundation & Friends, as an independent entity, to compliment and enhance the development initiatives of the Royal Botanic Gardens and Domain Trust. Our two organisations are now working more closely together to help inspire a greater appreciation and conservation of plants. As we review the amazing year that was, we are looking forward to the next!



From left: Paper Series by Hayden Youlley; Sun Arise by Eager and Vane; Dragonfly by Geoff Farquhar-Still; Official opening of the Australian Plantbank.

Colour, light and sound

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

Friends of Eurobodalla Regional Botanic Gardens (ERBG) held their Annual General Meeting on 19 October 2013. Among the highlights noted in the President's report were:

- Opening of the Mud Brick Cubby within the Playspace, built by local high school and primary school students under skilled supervision
- The Seed Bank coming into existence, following the appointment of our Seed Bank Officer
- Fit-out of the former workshop space as the Seed Bank premises and Manager's office, and construction of the new workshop
- The Giant Plant Sale on Easter Saturday
- Friends winning a 'Champions of the Catchment' Award, given by the Southern Rivers Catchment Management Authority, and a \$3,000 grant from FaHCSIA
- The People's Choice Calendar Photo Exhibition, in collaboration with the Eurobodalla Photographic Club
- Launch of the new Birds of the Gardens brochure.

Bringing these projects to a successful conclusion required the dedication of members of the Friends Committee, the leadership of Michael Anlezark the Gardens Manager, and support of his staff, and the mental and physical efforts of the volunteers, most of whom are Friends members, who support the team leaders.

The new birds brochure is worth a mention. The original leaflet, recently up-dated, names about 120 species seen at ERBG. It is simply a list, unlikely to satisfy the range of people who may want to know what they are looking at, particularly general visitors, children, and volunteers working at ERBG. We will continue to produce the current leaflet in house, but the new brochure features full colour photos to assist identification of the 40 birds most likely to be seen in the Gardens. The data for this new guide came from field trips to the Gardens undertaken by Eurobodalla Natural History Society (ENHS). As well, ENHS members hold high quality photos of local birds, which they have generously made available. Information about the habitat of the birds has been included. The new brochure was launched at 'Breakfast with the Birds' in late October, when more than 50 people enjoyed bird observing walks followed by a three-course breakfast. It was such a successful event we would like to repeat the walk plus breakfast component of the morning.

The Photographic Exhibition for the People's Choice Calendar was launched on 27 September with a group of Friends, members of the Eurobodalla Photographic Club, Council staff, sponsors and guest speaker, the renowned photographer Heide Smith. About 90 people attended, and with something to eat and drink in hand, spent time studying and voting on their favourite photos. The exhibition remained open through the school holidays. The calendar comprising the top five favourites and selected others to reflect the title, 'A Garden for All Seasons', will be ready in time for Christmas. As a spin-off we are going to print postcards and cards of popular photographs.



Callistemon citrinus Photo by Lisbeth Westra

Work and play at Geelong

*Friends of Geelong Botanic Gardens
Geelong, Victoria*



Water harvesting project. Photo by Judith Trimble

This has been another busy year for the Friends, and for Geelong Botanic Gardens. Like our Victorian colleagues, we have had to comply with the new Consumer Affairs Victoria legislation. We are reminded of Gore Vidal's dictum: 'Change is the nature of life, and its hope.' (*Washington DC 1967*)

In January we signed an MOU with the City of Greater Geelong to hand over schools and school holiday education programs to the GBG. Education, it was agreed, should be developed as a key offering to many more students at all levels, from kindergarten to university, and sustained into the foreseeable future. It was not going to be possible to achieve and maintain more extensive programs ourselves. The Friends continue to support education in the Gardens, contributing \$10,000 a year to Learn@GBG, and to provide in-kind assistance. Meanwhile, FGBG Guides continue their important work for visitors to the Gardens.

Recently the City has built important infrastructure to sustain the GBG. Geelong's ten-year drought required special permits allowing extensive watering of the Botanic Gardens. Eastern Park, inside which the GBG is located, was at greater risk. Work has now been completed on the Eastern Park Storm Water Harvesting Project, to salvage storm water from surrounding streets, and direct it into a large purpose-built dam. The water is then used for irrigating the Gardens, newly planted trees in Eastern Park, and Geelong street trees. 'The project will save up to 30 million litres of mains drinking water annually and improve the quality of the stormwater discharge into Corio Bay.' (For further details see: www.geelongaustralia.com.au/ct/service/article/item/8ce668c8f0f68e8.aspx.)

Friends' events this year have been numerous. There were painting, vessels and basket-weaving workshops in January. Our sixteenth Music in the Gardens, held every Sunday in February—four public concerts, attended by between 500 and 800 people from Geelong and further afield—was again a huge success. Our mighty band of volunteer Growers held three very profitable weekend autumn, winter and spring plant sales. Busloads of members toured the Australian Garden at the Royal Botanic Gardens, Cranbourne. A visit was also made to the Systems Garden at the University of Melbourne.

Our elegant annual Winter High Tea was celebrated at Truffleduck, where Dr Tim Entwisle, new Director of the RBG, gave a special address. Our Geelong Botanic Art School biennial exhibition, inspired by Nature 3, held this year at Wintergarden and opened by Stephen Ryan of Dicksonia Rare Plants, demonstrated the extraordinarily high quality of the works, and drew visitors from distant places. And, to our great delight, Dr Philip Moors, outgoing Director and Chief Executive of the RBG, has accepted our invitation to become our new Patron. We are now preparing for 'Through the Garden Gates', a picnic day visiting excellent gardens and concluding with celebratory Christmas drinks.

A great inspiration to the future of botanic gardens, was the very recent 6th BGANZ and 5th Global Botanic Gardens Conference held in Dunedin NZ, which I attended with Annie McGeachy. It is heart-warming to see people from all over the world sharing, supporting, delighting in the work being undertaken under some amazing circumstances. What joy to be part of such a vibrant community.

Susanna Keith and Judith Trimble (on behalf of FGBG Committee of Management)

Celebrating ten years of planting

*Friends of the Gold Coast Botanic Gardens
Gold Coast, Queensland*



Friends' tenth anniversary celebrations

On National Tree Day in July, several thousand residents joined our 10-year Anniversary Celebration at the Gold Coast Regional Botanic Gardens. From that first planting day in 2003, in fact from the first meeting with the Mayor and Councillors in 1997, Friends have had a pivotal role in every element of our Gardens.

To mark the occasion, Friends' past Presidents together with two past Mayors and current Councillors, planted significant local tree species in the Mangroves to Mountains

Transect. It was a proud day for Friends. Local plant societies and community organisations gave their time to entertain and cater for visitors at the Celebration. Current President, David Baguley, and founding President, Kate Heffernan, welcomed dignitaries as well as old and new supporters to the Friends Centre for the official part of the Celebration. In ten years Friends' role has grown, perhaps beyond our original expectations, and this year has been one of our busiest and most active.

The first stage of our Wallum (Heathland) Collection, planted by Friends and the community in Threatened Species Week in September, is the 18th zone of the planned 21 zone Mangroves to Mountains Precinct. It features our floral emblem, *Banksia aemula*. Coastal development has seen most of the Wallum disappear, making this Zone very important for conservation and education.

Friends Herbarium volunteers now collect from our region's natural areas, and have made several contributions to the Queensland Herbarium. Friends' vision of a Nursery has been realised with the aid of several grants. An enthusiastic propagation and growing group have undergone training and commenced growing regional species for the Plant Collection and for sale to bolster Friends' funds. The Wednesday gardening group has done site preparations for the 10th Anniversary plantings, planted an exotic roadside display garden, a Car Park Buffer Garden, infill plantings in the Mangrove to Mountain Transect and totally renovated the Rose Garden.

New Guides have been trained and joined the volunteers who staff the Friends/Visitor Centre and Gardens Library seven days a week. Our school holiday programs, Botanica Quest/Botanic Arts & Crafts, and our annual Arbor Day event are well-known and well-loved regular Friends' activities. Friends SMART Gardener Volunteers assisted the Gold Coast's principal environmental organisation with plans for a 'Learnscape Garden'. SMART Gardeners also welcome and lead high school groups in Botanic Gardens projects. Our talented Craft Group creates botanically inspired articles for sale as well as increasing our outreach by partnering with local schools.

Friends Management Committee is always planning and supporting Friends activities, and identifying ways to raise funds for the Gardens, including as volunteers at the Gold Coast Marathon. The Communications team creates posters, displays, writes articles, meets the media and generally makes sure Friends' name and activities are known. Friends' newsletter has a new format and a new name, *Growing Matters*, the theme for the forthcoming AFBG Conference. This is yet another demanding activity which promises to keep us busy and very excited throughout 2014.

Kate Heffernan, Communications Coordinator

We planted 1,050 Meadowland plants!

*Friends of Mackay Regional Botanic Gardens
Mackay, Queensland*



Meadowlands planting bee



Installing mosaics

This has continued to be a very busy and event-filled year for our tenth birthday. A hugely successful tenth birthday party for ten year olds was held in June. There were masses of outdoor activities for the children, culminating in a very sticky activity, decorating cupcakes for the birthday cake!

The oft-postponed (because of rain) gardening bee to plant 1,000 Mat Rushes in the Meadowlands lagoon edge area finally happened in late May, a really productive morning, helped along by the luscious scones one of the Friends produced. We actually planted 1050 plants with the addition of Swamp Lilies *Crinum pedunculatum*, Swamp Pandanus *Pandanus* sp. and of some riverine tree species including Black Ironbox *Eucalyptus raveretiana*, a vulnerable species in our bioregion.

The Meadowlands Amphitheatre opened with a bang in late July; the annual Rock-Pop-Mime show was attended by about 5,000 excited school children, their parents and friends over the entire evening. Rehearsals during the day sent all the birds packing at the first loud clap, but they were back the next day as if nothing had happened.

The exciting children's book *The Bungy Jumping Caterpillar* was launched in late May, then the Botanical Art Interest Group's calendar *Botanica* in late August. These are both projects to celebrate the tenth birthday and are selling well. We are very proud of our artists and authors.

Our Visitor Services Officer Maya has continued with her *Small Explorers* activities each month, providing fun and educational opportunities in the Gardens for toddlers and pre-schoolers and their carers, as well as inspirational holiday activities. Maya and a visiting mosaic artist, Pam Finlay, conducted mosaic workshops during the June school holidays. The children created mosaics of butterflies, leaves, birds, flowers and geckos which were designed to fit into the wall spaces of the Botanic Gardens' *PlayGarden*. The finished mosaic works have now been installed in the walls as permanent birthday presents for the Botanic Gardens.

After the Sunshine Coast national conference in August the Friends assisted the Melbourne Royal BG to host, along with the Society for Growing Australian Plants Mackay Branch, an ANPSA bus tour. It was a great opportunity to chat with ANPSA members from around the country, many of whom are Friends of their local botanic gardens.

We have also enjoyed some wonderful activities including guided walks to Cape Hillsborough's spectacular and diverse landscapes just north of Mackay and a 'Propagation from Cuttings' workshop in October, hosted by Garden Friend Meryl Ritchie.

Robin McWhinney, Secretary

The Orange-chested Haveachats

Friends of Maroochy Regional Bushland Botanic Gardens Tanawha, Queensland

When the Association of Friends of Botanic Gardens 'arrived' in 1993, the Maroochy Regional Bushland Botanic Garden was not even a glint in the eyes of its creators. But since we came into existence in 1996 we have benefitted greatly from the work of AFBG and we congratulate AFBG on its first 20 years.

The Maroochy Friends had their inaugural meeting in May 1996 with the aim of creating a regional bushland botanic garden (the region being from the NSW border to Fraser Island and up into the ranges) and most importantly finding a suitable site. This was discovered over a year later and, after intensive lobbying, was purchased by the Maroochy Council in 1997. The site is 82 ha and had been used for pineapple farming, sugar cane and running cattle. It had been extensively logged so most large trees were no longer there. There was however a diversity of topography and vegetation, with rainforest, a creek subject to rapid flooding, a small wetlands area and wet sclerophyll forest. The Friends put in an incredible amount of work getting rid of weeds, such as lantana and slash pine, and putting the infrastructure in place, with money from grants, fund raising and donations. In December 2001 the Gardens were officially opened.

A Sculpture Symposium was held in 2005 with eight local and overseas sculptors and 20 tonnes of black and white marble and sandstone. The finished sculptures were installed in a newly created garden in 2006, the much admired 'Sculpture Garden'. In 2007 a Commonwealth Regional Development Fund grant for \$3M was received by the newly amalgamated Sunshine Coast Council for an Arts and Ecology Centre. After a protracted design process the Centre opened in August 2011. The many design changes managed to exclude a visitor information centre; we are probably unique amongst botanic gardens having no visitor information area. But we keep working to improve our Garden, and we wish AFBG well for its next 20 years of challenges. So much for the history, and on to how we are now.



The Orange-chested Haveachats, hard at work, and the Sculpture Garden at Maroochy.



The Friends have about 30 active members who are still engaged in many infrastructure projects not normally undertaken by Friends in other gardens. With the talents in the group we are able to undertake timber and steel construction jobs, concreting paths, building retaining walls and drainage works. We have a tractor with three qualified drivers so we can move soil, rocks and mulch and remove rubbish. We have a large group who do the planting, weeding, mulching, tidying and general maintenance. All these workers can be easily spotted throughout the Gardens on Tuesday workdays in their hi-vis orange shirts and have been identified as a new species, the Orange Chested Haveachats.

We are starting to propagate plants, but with three community-based nurseries producing local plants nearby we will concentrate on the less common varieties. We have nine guides for scheduled and booked walks, and have managed to persuade the Council to trial an Information Desk in the A&E Centre two days a week. We are in the final stages of developing an additional 1250 m bushland walking track. We are aiming to have a complete collection of ferns of the area in our Fern Glade and we are in the early stages of upgrading and developing a children's experiential garden with the Council and their consultants

With these projects and the continuing enthusiasm and dedication of the Friends, the next 20 years of AFBG will see our Gardens become an even more precious jewel of the Sunshine Coast. We invite all participants in next year's Gold Coast AFBG Conference to pay us a visit – it's only just up the road a bit!

Bob Ducrou

Busy, busy, busy, at the Arboretum

*Friends of the National Arboretum Canberra
Canberra, ACT*



Pod Playground on opening day

We had another grand opening on 22 June 2013. It was the new Pod Playground, which features many activities to keep children entertained: acorn cubby houses connected by rope tunnels, sound-based attractions, rope nets to climb, chalk boards, slides, swings, a musical bridge and giant banksia cubbies to explore. It is designed to keep children physically active and caters for tiny tots, bigger kids, the brave and the not so brave. The ACT Chief Minister, Katy Gallagher, opened the playground, along with Andrew Leigh, Member for Fraser. If anything, Pod Playground proved to

be too popular and to ease the pressure, the Arboretum resorted to providing other attractions for children during the school holidays/Floriade period: craft activities where children made kites or terrariums, camel rides and a reptile display. All this required many volunteer hours from the Friends.

This year the Friends launched 'Warm Trees', a plan to brighten the Arboretum during July by applying knitted squares and scarves to tree trunks to encourage visitors to explore more of the Arboretum after exploring the visitor centre. We advertised for participants and many keen knitters came forward from the Friends, from friends of the Friends, from locally and interstate. The 150 participants kept in touch via a knitters' network and it quickly became an exercise in creativity. The quantity and quality of the knitted pieces was amazing and in the end several trees wore graphic tree designs. Knitted worms and acorns adorned other areas and a fairy ring of woolly toadstools sprang up. Treasure hunts were held in the forests, for families with children, and tree questions had to be answered, so there was also an educational component to the event. And the participants had fun!

Apart from working bees, Friends have helped Arboretum management with a tree replacement program, where we've supplied the man/woman-power to replace any dead trees and remove tree guards when they are no longer needed. We've produced a 2014 calendar which is selling at the Arboretum shop and through our website: www.arboretumcanberra.org.au. This tells the world about the Arboretum, but is also a fund-raiser for the Friends. Since running several Arboretum guide training courses and supplying new guides with uniforms, our outgoing expenses have been considerable. We are also presenting the Arboretum with a fire trailer as a Canberra Centenary gift.

With the Arboretum staff, a small team of Friends is working on a book about the Arboretum's 100 plus forest species. This has been a massive undertaking, and a difficult one, because little information and very few photographs are available on some of the rarer species. We hope to publish the book to coincide with the Arboretum's first birthday in February 2014.

Friends and staff have also been busy with over 380,000 visitors to the Arboretum since it opened in February.

Linda Muldoon, Publications Editor

Promoting weed awareness

*Friends of Noosa Botanic Gardens
Noosa, Queensland*



Visitors enjoying the spring guided walk led by Friends of the Noosa Botanic Gardens. Photo taken by our Chair, Joan Cordell.

The Friends of Noosa Botanic Gardens have had a busy and productive year. We have held walks and talks, commenced a number of projects, shared high tea with visiting garden clubs, increased awareness of the Gardens, and very significantly, we have assisted the Gardens' staff in presenting the Noosa Botanic Gardens at their very best for our visitors.

In June the Friends celebrated their first year of reformation (a Friends group in the 1990s was instrumental in the establishment of the Gardens). Many of the activities this year have seen the Friends establish their presence in regular community events. Each year our Gardens host the Festival of Water. This year, despite cloudy skies, the event was well attended and for the Friends this was our first opportunity to display our new banner and a great opportunity to connect with locals and members of the many community groups that attended the event.

Just a week later Friends were at the Queensland Garden Expo at Nambour which is a huge showcase of garden paraphernalia and plants. Our presence in the Gardens Club pavilion was a great opportunity to raise awareness of the Noosa Botanic Gardens; many of the passers-by were not aware of the Gardens and where they were.

Friends were successful in securing a Sunshine Coast Regional Council grant to promote environmental weed awareness, both within the group and to the public. The project will increase the Friends' ability to recognise weeds in the Gardens through production of field identification cards (due in 2014) and running information sessions. The project also includes funding to install signage on plants that are frequently seen in the landscape but are undesirable in local gardens due to their environmental impact. Signage will alert visitors to the concept of environmental weeds, identify some of the problem plants, and suggest alternative native plants.

Sunday 27 October was a beautiful spring day and perfect for the Friends' first ever public guided walk through the Gardens. Whilst visitors were shown the delights of the cottage garden, tropical plantings, water ponds and the rainforest gardens, there were also cautions issued. Visitors were warned about weeds, advised on managing them in the backyard to prevent escapes, and on native alternatives.

Friends have commenced a 'Grow our Gardens' project aiming to propagate and add plants to the Gardens collection. Our first activity was to take cuttings for the Fragrant Garden to fill the gaps in the 'scented pathway'. Other activities include collecting and sowing seed from annuals for the displays, collecting seed from sought-after specimens for Friends to sell, and dividing ferns to supplement the Gardens' existing collection.

Friends of Noosa Botanic Gardens have been lucky to have had great support from the Regional Council in 2013. Next year we commence a new era as the old Noosa Shire is reinstated and we work with a much smaller council to maintain and develop our beautiful Noosa Botanic Gardens.

Dr Seonaid Melville, Botanist, Educator

Birds and bugs

Friends of Orange Botanic Gardens Orange, New South Wales

We recently said goodbye to two of our most hard-working Friends. Col Magick has been a stalwart of our Wednesday Workers and his enthusiastic contribution over the years has been remarkable. We will miss Col and Beth who are relocating to Tanilba Bay to be with family. We also farewelled Gary Vaughn who was our invaluable Treasurer and supporter of our Friends' shop. Gary and Beverly are moving to Brisbane for Gary's health and to be close to their family. If you find them in a botanic garden near you, tell them we miss them enormously.

One of the most popular regular activities in our Botanic Gardens is the monthly bird walk on the first Sunday of every month, rain, hail or shine. The walks are led by ornithologists Bernie and Colina Huxtable who have been monitoring the birds in the Gardens for over 15 years. More than 110 species have been recorded in this cool climate botanic garden over that period. Every month, a keen group of bird-watchers gathers on a Sunday morning to enjoy a leisurely stroll around the various habitat areas in the Gardens and usually record about 30 species in a bit over an hour. Since Orange is situated at 930 metres above sea level, we have a distinct change of birdlife during the year with several species escaping the winter cold and returning to Orange during spring. These seasonal cycles add considerable interest to each walk. The Friends provide a morning tea following the walk, a very welcome reward for the hardy souls who venture out in the depths of winter in Orange, when the temperature might not reach double figures for weeks.

We also have regular Bug Walks led by entomologist Dr Murray Fletcher, ably assisted by Holger Löcker from the NSW Agricultural Scientific Collections which are located in Orange. Together they have now run seven Bug Walks around the Gardens. These have usually been held in late summer but this year there was also a spring walk on 22 September. The walks attract 25 to 30 people, mainly families with younger children, and Holger finds all kinds of insects and spiders for Murray to talk about, particularly in terms of their roles in a garden—herbivores, predators, parasites, recyclers, pollinators, etc. We had an adventure with a large huntsman spider on our February walk and in September managed to get two of our younger walkers stung by bull ants when Murray inadvertently stopped the group on the cleverly disguised nest hole. Despite these setbacks, the enthusiasm of the walkers, particularly the children, to examine and learn about beetles, bugs and butterflies is very exciting.

Murray Fletcher



Murray Fletcher surrounded by a fascinated audience on the September Bug Walk in Orange Botanic Gardens. Photo: Vicki Glover.

Stump in Time!

*Friends of Peacehaven Botanic Park
Highfield, Queensland*



They grind out old stumps, don't they? Not at Peacehaven Botanic Park at Highfields, north of the Queensland garden city of Toowoomba.

The stump of a centuries-old blackbutt felled there in the interests of safety in 2005 has been restored to provide a catalogue of world, national and local events dating back almost to the foundation of the Australian nation. Kingsthorpe district timber expert David Harriman, of Colonial Woodcrafts, carried out the restoration. Regional Mayor Cr Paul Antonio set the seal on the aptly named Stump in Time at the official unveiling on 28 July this year. The ceremony marked the culmination of a months-long project originally mooted by former long-serving Friends of Peacehaven secretary, Anna Smith.

Five colourful mosaics depicting heritage events and landmarks of the Highfields area have been set in concrete near the old stump. They were made by clients of Anglicare in Toowoomba, as were animal and bird mosaics previously placed throughout Peacehaven.

As for the old blackbutt tree itself, it had a life-span covering around eight human generations, or some 220 years. It was just a seedling when the great-great-great-great-great-grandparents of children who started school in 2005 were born.

Peacehaven Botanic Park is being established on 4.7 ha of former dairy-farming land gifted to the community by the late Stan Kuhl. The volunteer Friends group is helping Toowoomba Regional Council in developing the site.



Toowoomba Regional Council Mayor Cr Paul Antonio (right) and Friends of Peacehaven president George Smith at the unveiling of the Stump in Time.

A blaze of spring daffodils

*Friends of the Royal Botanic Gardens Melbourne
Melbourne, Victoria*



Photo by Katie O'Brien

The Plant Craft Cottage group has merged with the Melbourne Friends to function on a basis similar to the Botanical Illustrators and Growing Friends. The connection is significant. The Cottage formed the first supporters group at the Gardens in 1981 from which the wider-based Friends was established. Now the two organisations are 'one' again, looking forward to joint activities and a close relationship. The Cottage, a heritage-listed 1850s under-gardener's dwelling, has a gardening group, holds children's activities, sells members' hand-crafted items in their shop, and teaches basketry, paper-making, dyeing and other skills based on plant materials.

The Friends have committed \$100,000 towards the first stage of a major revamp of the Fern Gully. A low-rise steel boardwalk with handrails, a ramp and five timber bridges will make the Fern Gully accessible to all visitors. The Gully was designed by William Guilfoyle in the late 1800s; paths that have been closed for safety reasons will be re-opened as part of this project and new plants will be introduced.

Friends membership has reached an all-time high of 2,500. The Botanical Illustrators classes and exhibitions, together with the Growing Friends spring and autumn sales, provide great opportunities to recruit new members. The spring plant sale was a wonderful success, raising the highest amount for more than 10 years! An October exhibition, 'From the Forest to the Foreshore', covered natural history subjects including ferns, fungi, frogs, butterflies, seaweed and feathers. It was a 'first', encouraging Friends outside the Botanical Illustrators to show their work.

We joined Cranbourne Friends to present two challenging talks: Melbourne's Sad Streams: Can we regain their lost richness? and another on conserving the platypus.

Coinciding with the Monet exhibition at the National Gallery of Victoria, Botanical Illustrators attended a four-day workshop to master the art of painting the flowers that Monet loved. The Friends appreciated a talk by the gallery curator about the horticultural inspiration behind the artist's famous garden at Giverny. Another treat was a talk and viewing of the exhibition.

In October Phillip Johnson described the effort and then triumph behind his team's Best In Show and Gold Medals at the Chelsea Flower Show. On a smaller scale, our President led a very popular hands-on workshop on amazing plant terrariums.

Prof. Tim Entwisle was discussing with staff his 20-year vision for the Gardens when two malicious attacks of vandalism marred his positive and welcoming settling-in period as Director and Chief Executive. First, 80 per cent of the columnar cacti were slashed in the Arid Garden during an overnight attack. Six weeks later, eight trees were damaged including the historic Separation Tree. In the short term, protection has been boosted and a comprehensive review of security has been undertaken. But Tim asserts that 'the Gardens cannot, and should not be, a high security compound'.

To end on a brighter note: six thousand daffodil bulbs generated a golden blaze on Oak Lawn during spring. They were a parting gift from previous director Dr Philip Moors.

Heather Ironmonger

Australian garden design has arrived!

*Friends of the Royal Botanic Garden Cranbourne
Cranbourne, Victoria*

Since 1788 gardens created in Australia have been based on English designs. Across Australia our greatest established gardens have followed the likes of Capability Brown. Attempts from the 1950s to establish Australian bush gardens fizzled out as they did not really suit our lifestyle. Over the past 20 years, many gardens around Australia have included an Australian inspired section. This trend is increasing.

Philanthropists sponsored the Royal Botanic Gardens Melbourne to exhibit at the 2011 Chelsea Flower Show with a garden designed by Jim Fogarty, which was inspired by the Australian Garden at the Royal Botanic Gardens Cranbourne. That popular Chelsea show garden was awarded a Gold Medal.

Over a period of years Fleming's Nurseries has successfully participated at Chelsea, but Wes Fleming announced that 2013 would be his last entry. Phillip Johnson was engaged to design the final Fleming exhibit. With a couple of years planning and a huge dose of Australian flair, an impressive Australian style garden was created. The garden impressed everyone from Royalty to the judging panel, which unanimously awarded the Fleming/Johnson garden 'Best in Show'. Wow! Australian garden design has been recognised at the most prestigious garden show in the world, so I contend that *Australian Garden Design has Arrived!*

Breaking news arrived just as I was poised to press the send button. Taylor Cullity Lethlean with Paul Thomson, the designers of the Australian Garden, have just been awarded the World Landscape Architecture Award for 2013

Alex Smart with Jill Burness



Photo courtesy Flemings Nursery shows R to L Phillip Johnson describing his garden to HRH Queen Elizabeth and Wes Fleming looking like the cat that swallowed the cream.

Official opening by NSW Governor

Friends of Southern Highlands Botanic Gardens Bowral, New South Wales

The official opening of the Southern Highlands Botanic Gardens in Bowral NSW, will take place on Sunday 8 December 2013 when Her Excellency Professor Marie Bashir AC CVO, Governor of New South Wales, will officiate on the site. The ceremony will include the unveiling of a plaque commemorating the time capsule for the sesquicentenary of Bowral, which will be planted near a specially paved area. Produced locally by Bowral Bricks Pty Ltd, these pioneer pavers have been purchased by families and individuals to commemorate their children or family members with their names stencilled in the brick.

The SHBG is different from most other botanic gardens in Australia in that ours is a community project, driven and managed by the community. This means that we have to raise funds for the operation of the Gardens as well as all the development projects. The support from the community is vitally important.

The revised plans for the Gardens were completed and submitted to Council for their approval earlier in the year. Kate Cullity's final design is beautifully executed and it is with increasing excitement that the community awaits the start of the major landscaping. Notwithstanding the necessary wait for final approval, it's been a busy time on the site over the last few months. A small pavilion was completed recently and surrounding this building the Friends of the SHBG have planted a garden and nearly 100 sponsored trees, including the birch collection comprising 18 species and cultivars. The birch collection was made possible by the generous donation of \$20,000 from The Highlands Garden Society.

Another special collection is planned within the birch grove. Tony Davis (who is known as the Southern Highlands 'Daffodil Man') has offered to plant some of his own daffodils, including named cultivars, under the birch trees. He has been breeding daffodils for the past 29 years—one of only twenty breeders in Australia—and he and his partner, Maureen Purtell, are long-serving supporters of the Gardens along with Ann and Tony Emmett, and of course the late Jim Osborne with the support of Margaret. We have recently made these members Life Members of the Friends.

Our first planting was also the start of a number of botanical collections to be held in the gardens—*Escalonia*, *Lagerstroemia* (Crepe Myrtle) and of course the *Buxus* collection. We currently have sixteen different *Buxus* species and cultivars, which probably puts the collection as one of the biggest in Australia. Many of the plants in this collection were donated by Anthony and Pat di Francesco—a collection that they started in 1998 after visiting Langley Boxwood Nursery in Hampshire England where the British National Collection of Buxus is housed. A number of the Buxus were imported from the Washington Arboretum.

The official opening on Sunday 8 December is an important milestone in the community life of the Southern Highlands and all are welcome to this social occasion.

Charlotte Webb OAM, Chairman of the Board of SHGB



Captions:
Margaret Osborne,
working outside the
Pavilion; and the
Pavilion.

Threatened species project

Friends of Tamworth Regional Botanic Garden Tamworth, New South Wales

After hearing disturbing reports about the extinction and vulnerability of lots of our native species, we saw the opportunity of doing something about the situation. So about mid-2008 we gathered together some willing helpers, from Australian Plant Society (APS) mainly, the Friends of the Tamworth Botanic Garden and the local Council.

Our aims were to collect threatened species seeds or cuttings from the northern tablelands, the northwest slopes and the north west plains, propagate them and plant and grow them *ex situ* in a secure area. The Tamworth Regional Botanic Garden was an ideal site for our project, so we selected a few areas and made a presentation to the Tamworth Regional Council for permission to undertake the project. Approval was enthusiastically granted by Council; the conservation of endemic plants was one of the original aims of the Botanic Garden. So we now had the basics for our project.

It was then necessary to obtain a scientific approval from Department of Environment and Climate Change, according to National Parks regulations, to collect the threatened species from the wild. This was achieved in 2009 and we began collecting and propagating.

We had plenty of workers but we also needed money. We applied for grants from governments, council and businesses around town without success, so the project was on hold until Graeme Ingall, then president of NSW Australian Plant Society, suggested we apply to APS for a grant from the Bequest Funds. This was successful and funding of \$20,000 was granted to be issued in increments of \$5,000 as we needed it. Shortly after we received another \$15,000 from Tamworth Council—I think they were encouraged after seeing the progress we had made with APS money.

We completed the access road, purchased and installed an irrigation drip system, stakes and sleeves for the plants, steel posts and wire for the guards for our first planting. We had the first planting in March 2011 at which 52 trees and shrubs were planted, representing four families, five genera and eight species.

We have now finished the majority of the infrastructure and we have spent most of the \$15,000 council grant. All the main irrigation lines are buried underground, 500 holes dug and filled with suitable loam, dripper tubing, drippers and fittings have been purchased plus steel posts, rolls of wire mesh for tree guards, plastic tubes and bamboo stakes for planting out small plants. And we have bought 600 plastic stakes to attach name tags—these have been made on the engraving machine belonging to the Botanic Garden. This should suffice for quite a number of years and we are now in a position to get on with collecting and propagating.

Bill Hardin, APS



From Tamworth R C website: <http://www.tamworth.nsw.gov.au/>

Rotunda's 100th birthday

*Friends of Warrnambool Botanic Gardens
Warrnambool, Victoria*

The Gardens continue to thrive under the care of our Curator and his team. A wet and extended winter has revitalised shrubs and trees and nourished a lush, intense, green lawn. Selective pruning and removal of invasive plants is restoring the breathtaking beauty of Guilfoyle's design, and the intense colours of the spring flowers add interest and variety. Our's is a mature garden dating from 1866 so we have the opportunity to recall and celebrate many past events.



At the Rotunda. From left, inaugural member of the Friends and grand daughter of John Wilson Younger; the mayor who opened the rotunda Marigold Curtis; and Janet Macdonald, Friends' vice President.

activity with small children was the mud-pie kitchen. The mini master chefs were busy at their work and the soup they made looked particularly interesting.

Water, its source, its use and conservation is the top priority for the Friends in the coming year. We hope the watering system will be upgraded, saving both water and labour, and we have an ambitious plan to tell the story of water supply over the years through the history of the Gardens. We have, in cooperation with other organisations, created a water-wise garden with appropriate signs. We intend to expand this to incorporate the old well from which water was drawn in the 1880s. This project combines heritage, conservation and imagination and is very exciting.

The Gardens are being used more and more for events large and small. Today we benefit from the foresight of those who planned and planted for posterity. How lucky we are.

We are taking advantage of technology with a QR code on the Rotunda that takes you to our web site and a booking form. We have an online membership form and newsletters back to 1992. Our Curator and staff keep everyone up to date with pictures and information of plants as they flower, tempting people to visit the Gardens on Facebook

In the year 1913 Mayor Younger performed the opening ceremony for the Band Rotunda in Warrnambool Botanic Gardens. One hundred years later, his grand daughter Marigold Curtis took part in the centenary celebrations. What better way to say happy birthday to a band rotunda than with bands. In the weeks prior to the event, the call went out to local musical groups to join in the party.

The Warrnambool Pipes and Drums and the Warrnambool City Band, long time favourites with Botanic Gardens audiences over many years, were first to answer the call. No need to advertise your event in the 'What's On' column of the newspaper when you have the Pipes and Drums on the program. The skirl of the drums and the sounds of the bagpipes certainly attracted the attention of the neighbourhood. Activities on the day included a display of historic photos of the Gardens and Rotunda, plant and produce stalls, guided tours of the Gardens, a raffle, and a very well patronised sausage sizzle. A very popular

Pat Varley and Janet Macdonald

150 years on Wombat Hill

Friends of Wombat Hill Botanic Gardens Daylesford, Victoria

On 11 May the Friends of Wombat Hill Botanic Gardens joined the Governor of Victoria, representatives of Hepburn Shire, and a crowd of friends of the much-loved Gardens, to celebrate the proclamation in 1863 of a botanic garden on a hill overlooking Daylesford.

It was also the vice-regal opening of the newly restored Rustic Cascade, the central feature of the restoration of Sangster's Fern Gully, which has been the ambitious project of the Friends for the past two years. To see the water cascading over rocks and ponds in an area cleared of ineffective and bedraggled overhead irrigation, years of unchecked, self-sown cherry laurel, pittosporum and sycamore and metres of 19th century barbed wire, was a source of tremendous pride to us all.

All of this was achieved by the sweat of the Friends' brows! From the fundraising since August 2011, to the weekly efforts of the Growing (and Weeding) Friends, to the occasional working bee, the effort was immense and sustained. And it's not over yet. Since then the irrigation has been renewed and extended, the path reconstructed and over 600 new ferns have been planted. And the Friends' bed has been expanded to join the Fernery, in keeping with the Conservation Management Plan of 2007.

Daylesford Botanic Gardens, Wombat Hill, is a remarkable collection of ancient and venerable trees, many of them conifers sent to the Gardens by Baron von Mueller in the 1860s and early 1870s. Taylor and Sangster were commissioned in the 1880s to bring a bit more landscape and style to the hilltop with its 360° views of the town, the gold diggings and the forest. A fernery and cascade were part of their plan for Wombat Hill. The post WW2 years were not kind. Hepburn Shire has not had the wherewithal to undertake major work in the Gardens with two and, for the last 10 years mostly one, full-time gardener to maintain this heritage site. The garden continues to charm and impress, but the future has looked problematic.

The success of the Friends has generated excitement and energy. The new Café by Lake House and the Wolf-Taskers has been a major asset to the community and has focused on a younger demographic. But the sense of loving care in the rejuvenation of the place as a whole is commented upon by all who visit—even on the bleakest of days.

The next big project is the completion of a Collection Plan and Landscape Master-Plan to take the Gardens into the next 150 years—a time where professional curatorial oversight will still be beyond the means of the local government managers. Making sure that the heritage, botanical and community values of our Botanic Gardens endure is the task we have set ourselves. It is certainly a difficult one, but hugely satisfying too. Many thanks to the multitude who have supported us in the achievement of the dream so far.



Ray and Annie in the pottery



Stonemason at work on the Cascade



The Governor doing his thing

Celebrating a centenary

Kirstenbosch Volunteer Garden Guides, Botanical Society of South Africa, Kirstenbosch Branch, Cape Town, South Africa



Just a brief summary of a very hectic few months at Kirstenbosch where we have been celebrating our centenary. The official birthday was 1 July and there were numerous highlights.

The Kirstenbosch book by Professor Brian Huntley was launched. It illustrates the history of the gardens and is 'must have' for everyone interested in our beautiful garden. Other events were:

- Commemorative stamps were issued.
- A photo competition was launched.
- A 50 m commemorative banner was erected in the gardens.
- In July the Welwitschia garden was opened in the Conservatory.
- In September we held a very successful Bienalle exhibition.
- We also had a very popular Biodiversity day celebrating 100 years.

We held a very happy 'Members tea party' where we entertained about 800 members to tea on the Marquee Lawns. The president of the Botanical Society, Dr Ted Oliver, addressed all the members and gave a big thank you to everyone for all the fund raising and hard work.

The garden guides led a Centenary walk on the first Saturday of every month. This walk is a History Walk going back in time to the start of the gardens in 1913. The second Saturday has been a themed walk and the third Saturday a Centenarian walk which has focused on 32 trees which have had a 100 year association with the gardens. In September we have also started the Heritage walks which take visitors around the historical points of interest (well illustrated with story boards.)

We won gold at Chelsea this year so we have had the Chelsea Exhibit on display at the waterfront and the garden guides have been helping man the exhibition. We also held a very successful garden fair in May and a Gala dinner in September. On top of this we also offered Winter Wonder Adventure Walks for children in the July holidays, as well as Fire-fly Walks in October/November. There have also been many various bird walks so all in all a busy year so far!

Next month we hope to be opening our elevated Skywalk walkway above the Arboretum. It is in the shape of a snake, a local variety called a Boomslang. It will rise up to nine meters high and will be wheel chair friendly so we expect a huge amount of interest in this new addition when it is finally opened..

We also have just had a visit from Warwick and Pat Wright with a group from Canberra and had a wonderful time showing them around the Cape in Spring.

Members of Association of Friends of Botanic Gardens Inc

ACT

Australian National Botanic Gardens, Friends of. GPO Box 1777, Canberra ACT 2601.
National Arboretum Canberra, Friends of. PO Box 48, Campbell ACT 2812.

New South Wales

Albury Botanic Gardens, Friends of. PO Box 1056, Albury NSW 2640.
Botanic Gardens Sydney, Foundation & Friends of. Cottage 6, Mrs Macquaries Road, Sydney NSW 2000.
Burrendong Arboretum, PO Box 465, Wellington NSW 2820.
Eurobodalla Regional Botanic Gardens, Friends of. PO Box 1068, Batemans Bay NSW 2536.
Lismore Rainforest Botanic Garden, Friends of. PO Box 1327, Lismore NSW 2480.
Moama & Echuca Botanic Gardens. PO Box 545, Moama NSW 2731.
North Coast Regional Botanic Gardens, Friends of. PO Box 648, Coffs Harbour NSW 2450.
Orange Botanic Gardens, Friends of. PO Box 17, Orange NSW 2800.
Southern Highlands Botanic Gardens, Friends of. PO Box 707, Bowral NSW 2577.
Stony Range Regional Botanic Garden, Advisory Committee. 369 Pittwater Rd, Dee Why NSW 2099.
Tamworth Regional Botanic Gardens, Friends of. PO Box 1393, Tamworth NSW 2340.
Woollongong Botanic Garden, Friends of. 61 Northfield Ave, Keiraville, NSW 2500.

Northern Territory Darwin Botanic Gardens, Friends of. PO Box 36435, Winnellie NT 0821.

Queensland

Brisbane Botanic Gardens Volunteer Guides, Mt Coo-tha Botanic Gardens, Mt Coo-tha Road, Toowong QLD 4066
Gold Coast Botanic Gardens, Friends of. PO Box 5653, Gold Coast Mail Centre, QLD 9726.
Mackay Regional Botanic Gardens. Friends Association. PO Box 6850, Mackay QLD 4741.
Maroochy Regional Bushland Botanic Gardens, Friends of. PO Box 445, Buderim, QLD 4556.
Noosa Botanic Gardens, Friends of. PO Box 454, Noosa Heads QLD 4567
Peacehaven Botanic Park, Friends of. 30 Sunray Drive, Highfields QLD 4352.
Tamborine Mountain Botanic Gardens, Friends of. Forsythia Drive, Eagle Heights QLD 4272.

South Australia

Australian Arid Lands Botanic Garden, Friends of. PO Box 2040, Port Augusta SA 5700.
Botanic Gardens of Adelaide, Friends of. North Terrace, Adelaide SA 5000.

Tasmania

Royal Tasmanian Botanical Gardens, Friends of. C/o RTBG, Domain Road, Hobart TAS 7000.
Tasmanian Arboretum, PO Box 370, Devonport TAS 7310.

Victoria

Australian Botanic Gardens Shepparton, Friends of. PO Box 6912, Shepparton VIC 3632.
Australian Inland Botanic Garden, Friends of. PO Box 2809, Mildura VIC 3502.
Ballarat Botanical Gardens, Friends of. PO Box 33W, Ballarat West VIC 3353
Benalla Botanical Gardens & Riverine Parkland, Friends of. PO Box 589, Benalla VIC 3672.
Bendigo Botanic Garden, Friends of. PO Box 117, Strathdale VIC 3550.
Buninyong Botanic Garden, Friends of. 102 Cornish St, Buninyong Vic 3357.
Burnley Gardens, Friends of. C/o Burnley College, 500 Yarra Boulevard, Richmond VIC 3121.
Colac Botanic Gardens, Friends of. PO Box 403, Colac, VIC 3250.
Geelong Botanic Gardens, Friends of. PO Box 235, Geelong VIC 3220.
George Pentland Botanic Gardens, Friends of. PO Box 490, Frankston, VIC 3199.
George Tindale Memorial Garden, Friends of. 2/92 Main St, Upwey VIC 3158.
Gisborne Botanic Gardens, Friends of. PO Box 564, Gisborne VIC 3437.
Grampians Flora Botanic Gardens Group. C/o M. Sietsma, 146 Grampians Rd, Halls Gap VIC 3381.
Hamilton Botanic Gardens, Friends of. PO Box 43, Hamilton VIC 3300.
Karwarra Australian Plant Garden, Friends of. Mt Dandenong Tourist Rd, Kalorama VIC 3766.
Kyneton Botanical Gardens, Friends of. PO Box 47, Kyneton VIC 3444.
Malmsbury Botanic Gardens & Environs, Friends of. PO Box 116, Malmsbury VIC 3446.
Melton Botanic Gardens, Friends of. C/o PO Box 2381, Melton South VIC 3338.
Port Fairy Botanical Gardens, Friends of. 115 Regent St, Port Fairy VIC 3284.
Royal Botanic Gardens, Cranbourne, Friends of. 1000 Bullarto Rd. Cranbourne VIC 3977.
Royal Botanic Gardens Melbourne, Friends of. Gate Lodge, 100 Birdwood Avenue, Melbourne VIC 3004.
Sale Botanical Gardens, Friends of. PO Box 506, Sale VIC 3850.
St Arnaud Queen Mary Gardens, Friends of. 5018 Ararat-St Arnaud Rd, Tottington VIC 3478
St Kilda Botanical Gardens, Friends of. PO Box 1089, Elwood VIC 3184.
Warrnambool Botanic Gardens, Friends of. PO Box 1190, Warrnambool VIC 3280.
Williamstown Botanic Garden, Friends of. PO Box 826, Williamstown VIC 3016.
Wilson Botanic Park, Friends of. PO Box 412, Berwick VIC 3806.
Wombat Hill Botanic Gardens, Friends of. PO Box 267, Daylesford VIC 3460.

Western Australia

Kings Park, Friends of. KPBG, Fraser Ave. Kings Park, West Perth WA 6005

Affiliate Members

Christchurch Botanic Gardens, Friends of. PO Box 2553, Christchurch 8140, New Zealand

Kirstenbosch Volunteer Garden Guides, Botanical Society of South Africa – Kirstenbosch Branch, PO Box 53445, Kenilworth, 7745, Cape Town, South Africa

Total

55 Members, 2 Affiliate Members

2013-14 Committee

represented by:

Friends of AALBG, Port Augusta, SA

Friends of Ballarat BG, Vic

Friends of ANBG, Canberra, ACT

Friends of Geelong BG, Vic

Friends of Gold Coast Regional BG, Qld

Friends of RBG Cranbourne, Vic

Friends of RBG Melbourne, Vic

Friends of Melton BG, Vic

Friends of Wombat Hill BG, Daylesford, Vic

President Geraldine Davis, and John Zwar

Elizabeth Gilfillan

Vice-President Warwick Wright

Secretary Annie McGeachy

Neil Morley and Beverley Windsor

Alex Smart

Treasurer Karlene Taylor

John Bentley

Patrice O'Shea

Calendar of events

2013

8 December 2013

Southern Highlands Botanic Gardens, Moss Vale
Official Opening

2014

Friday 8 to Sunday 10 August

AFBG conference: 'Growing Matters...Growing Gardens, Growing Friends', hosted by the Friends of the Gold Coast Botanic Gardens at the Mercure Gold Coast Resort. See page 15 for details

17-22 August

National Horticultural Congress, Brisbane
<www.ihc2014.org/>

2-4 October 2014

BGANZQ Biennial Conference, Cairns BG

21-23 November

BGANZ NSW Regional Conference, Dubbo

Australian Native Plants Society

For events in your region, go to: <asgap.org.au>

For all regional BGANZ events go to:

<www.bganz.org.au>

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

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>

Weeds Australia

<www.weeds.org.au>

Australian Native Plants Society

<<http://asgap.org.au>>

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

Australian Open Garden Scheme:

<www.opengarden.org.au>

Fungimap:

<www.rbg.vic.gov.au/fungimap/home>

Plants for the Planet:

<www.plantsfortheplanet.com>