



# Campsis

Newsletter of the Australian Association of  
Friends of Botanic Gardens No.44 May 2015

## In this issue:

As you can see below Geelong is well on the way with its preparations for the 2016 AAFBG Biennial Conference and we hope that many Friends groups will be able to come to Geelong next April. The other big news is that the Friends of the Royal Botanic Gardens Edinburgh, Scotland, has now joined the AAFBG as an Affiliate Member and Friends of Dubbo Regional Botanic Garden have joined the Australian membership. Our logo, above, is in the process of being changed to incorporate 'Australian', however, Friends of Botanic Gardens located overseas will always be welcome to become affiliate members. Now enjoy reading the news from Friends in Cairns, Canberra (ANBG and Arboretum), Cranbourne, Eurobodalla, Lismore, Mackay, Melbourne, Melton, Orange, Port Augusta, Southern Highlands, Sydney, Tamworth and Edinburgh.

## Invitation to 2016 AAFBG Conference

*Regional Relevance: botanic environments and their survival in a time of global warming*

The Association invites all our members and their guests to the Biennial Conference, to be held in Geelong on 29 April – 1 May 2016. Preparation is well under way.

The Conference will open officially in the early evening of Friday 29 April with a civic reception in the elegant surroundings of the Geelong Gallery. An exhibition of works by the Friends of Geelong Botanic Gardens' Botanic Art School will also be held in the Gallery. Our Conference venue is the Geelong Conference Centre located in Eastern Park a few steps from the Geelong Botanic Garden. It offers excellent conference facilities and residential accommodation.

Our Conference theme addresses today's issues—complex ecosystems under threat—and asks how we might best support our botanic gardens to conserve species, support projects in the wild, and spread knowledge and understanding. What do adaptability, sustainability and management in twenty-first century botanic gardens mean in a time of global warming? Speakers from leading institutions and Friends will present papers on grasslands, forests, coastal vegetation, conservation and communication. Tours will introduce delegates to specific projects on-site on the Bellarine Peninsula, and in coastal and forested areas towards the Otway Ranges, and deal with grasslands closer to Melbourne. A forum will encourage Friends' participation in discussions on common concerns. There will be guided visits to the Geelong Botanic Gardens and walks



Map showing location of Gardens and Conference Centre and the luxurious surroundings at the Conference Centre.

# Australian Association of Friends of Botanic Gardens

**Incorporation:** AOO26805Z

## Office bearers

President: Kate Heffernan, Gold Coast RBG

Vice-President: Warwick Wright, ANBG ACT

Sec/Public Officer: Elizabeth Giffillan, Ballarat

Treasurer: Judy Fyfe, Geelong BG

## General Committee

Geraldine Davis, AALBG, Pt Augusta

John Bentley, Melton BG

John Zwar, AALBG Pt Augusta

Lorna Downey, RBG Melbourne

## Admin Officer

Ro Noone, Geelong Vic

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## 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 members.

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](mailto:campsis@friendsanbg.org.au)

We welcome your articles for inclusion and photographs and important calendar events.

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

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## 2016 Conference continued



Eastern Park

in Eastern Park, and time to network between sessions and at the Conference dinner. Of course, our AGM is incorporated into the program.

Eastern Park, the site for the conference, initially was a windswept, treeless 200-acre site, the whole of which was set aside by the City in 1851 for a Botanic Garden. However, with shallow soil and no water, the Botanic Garden was established from the outset on a small patch in a sheltered cleft of the site, where the nursery, conservatory and aviary formed the focus of public attention. Carriageways and avenues of trees marked the development of the Park during the nineteenth century.

By the turn of the century, cultivated areas outside this domain had diminished and only the nursery area remained highly cultivated and so became known as the Geelong Botanic Gardens. In 1959 the Western boundary of the Gardens was shifted outwards to increase its size from about five acres to nine, and in 2002 the contemporary 21<sup>st</sup> Century Garden and Podbury Drive were built to reconnect the Botanic Gardens to Corio Bay and the City. New plantings, often replacing senescent stock, are reinstating an arboretum, and a water catchment system has been established on the once bleak site.

Eastern Park is located on the headland, forming one end of the vibrant, sunny waterfront precinct alongside Corio Bay (which is within walking distance of our Conference Centre). If you have not visited Geelong for a while, you will notice considerable change. Bars, restaurants, joggers, family strollers and festivals make the waterfront one of the liveliest places in Geelong's CBD. Shops are plentiful, and museums, galleries, theatres and cinemas are all available close by. Our Conference dinner will be held in the waterfront precinct.

Sponsorship is currently being sought for the Conference to keep our members' costs as low as possible. While the program is finalised, registration and other details will be available as soon as they are settled.

*Judith Trimble and Jayne Salmon  
for the FGBG Conference Committee*

# From the President

*Kate Heffernan*

Our President, Kate Heffernan, is currently enjoying two months overseas. Kate visited Scotland for seven weeks of their early spring and visited many gardens with her husband Alan Donaldson. As well as meeting with affiliate AAFGB member, Friends of RBG Edinburgh, they enjoyed a day at Glasgow Botanic Gardens with Friends President Brian Atkinson. Here is her report.



What a welcome we received from the Friends of Royal Botanic Gardens Edinburgh. Possibly the warmest and driest day of our two month holiday in Scotland, it was just perfect for a customised guided walk with Volunteer Guide, David Binnie. David greeted us at the impressive John Hope Gateway. The title of the striking building challenged us to investigate the reason for its naming and we were fascinated to learn from impressive interpretation inside the building that it was named to honour the man behind the transformation of the earlier Physic Garden at Leith Walk to the present day Botanic Garden at Inverleith. The building itself is almost revolutionary in its design, every inch is crafted with the lowest possible impact on the environment. The John Hope Gateway is framed by a contemporary landscape called the Biodiversity Garden, designed to celebrate diversity and educate visitors through displaying both natural species and cultivars and stimulating interpretation.

David's walk and friendly informative talk filled in so many gaps in our knowledge of the plant collection. Alan and I have visited RBGE four times in the past decade and there has been a significant new development every time. This time the re-location and re-construction, stone by stone, of the historic Botanic Cottage from Leith Walk into the Gardens.

We were treated to delightful lunch at the John Hope Gateway Restaurant with Chair, Shiona Mackie and several hard-working committee members, the RBGE Membership Coordinator Alison, as well as meeting Regius Keeper Simon Milne. The conversation revolved around the hard work and commitment of Friends of gardens everywhere and how similar are the challenges and the successes for us all. There is much to learn from the work of Edinburgh Friends and their fundraising efforts were about to be bolstered by a massive Friends Nursery Plant Sale Day. A visit to the Friends Nursery, located within the Gardens Nursery, showed a well organised layout and a great selection of plants ready for sale. The annual Friends Nursery Sale attracts crowds who line up before the gates are opened, and it is so popular that an entry fee is charged to attend.

Our visit continued into the evening when we attended the Friends AGM. Well organised, the election of Office bearers followed an inspiring list of Friends achievements outlined by Shiona. Alison also spoke of the significant contribution made by Friends to the Gardens. A lengthy list of recipients and Gardens projects funded by Friends was outlined and both Alan and I were very impressed with the breadth of their financial commitment. Simon Milne gave a motivating presentation, supported by brilliant images, and took us along his plants and animals journey, including how he managed to merge his passion for the environment with his military service. He described his concerns for the environment and stressed how everything begins and ends with plants.

What a day we had with our furthest and newest affiliate member of AAFGB! The importance of AAFGB and our Friends networks near and far was firmly highlighted.

# Secretary's Report

*Elizabeth Gilfillan*



It has been exciting and a great pleasure to welcome new affiliate member Friends of RBG Edinburgh, Scotland, new members Friends of Dubbo Regional Botanical Garden and Friends of Cairns Botanical Gardens to your Association. We look forward to their news and a long friendship.

Where have the last six months flown? With many other commitments, it has been a settling-in period and, no excuses, I have not done a lot of work on Deductible Gift Recipient status. It is hoped that we will have some positive news for the AGM in June, now with our new Treasurer, Judy Fyfe (Geelong Friends), and committee this will be finalised shortly. Thanks to Annie McGeachy for all her work on DGR status thus far. At February's meeting, we also welcomed Lorna Downey (Melbourne Friends) on to the General Committee. Lorna comes to us with considerable understanding of botanic gardens from a previous role as administrative assistant to the Director of RBG Melbourne and is currently an active volunteer.

Once again our sincere thanks go to the Handbury Trust for the generous annual gift of \$10,000—we are extremely grateful. This certainly enables us to look at giving materially to members and alleviates financial pressure on the committee. It is the third year of a five-year benefaction.

The Association is eager for a grant process to begin. I commend committee members John Bentley and Judith Trimble's amendments to the Grant Application Form and hope this will be functional soon. We encourage all members to look at what can be achieved in their Garden with this grant.

Thanks to FGBG for the exciting Conference Report on page 1. Well done, we have much to look forward to in 2016. And it is time to consider hosting the biennial Conference in 2018. We welcome your interest and applications. There is information about hosting and an application form at the back of this issue of *Campsis*.

In April I was very pleased to attend the BGANZ Vic. Network Meeting hosted by White Hills Botanic Garden in Bendigo. The theme of the meeting was Plant Conservation: An Attainable Goal for Regional Botanic Gardens. We were welcomed by BGANZ Chair, Dale Arvidsson from QLD, who spoke of Professional links and the advantages relevant to the community. Neville Walsh, Senior Conservation Botanist Plant Sciences RBG Melbourne, highlighted Sustainability & Conservation procedures and the possibility of regional Gardens being involved in seed banking. John Arnott, Manager Horticulture at RBG Cranbourne, gave an overview to regional plant conservation with in situ and ex situ research involving community education and networking in identifying, collection of plants, seeds and pollen. There is suggestion of BGANZ of developing a Web Multisite conservation collection base. We will look forward to progress on this exciting idea. Andrew Laidlaw RBG Melbourne spoke of opportunities and challenges and integrating indigenous plant displays into Heritage landscapes. It was an interesting and thought provoking day and a great opportunity to meet with members from other Regional Botanic Gardens both old and new.

It has been a busy first six months in office and I am very aware of the important role this organisation plays. It is by sharing experience and knowledge that we gain invaluable and intangible benefits of membership. My thanks for your continued support of your Association.

My thanks also to Ro for her guidance and invaluable administrative support.

# Administrative Officer's Report

Ro Noone

Dear Members

You may recall a request late last year from Bob Ducrou, Secretary of Friends of the Maroochy Regional Bushland and Botanic Gardens, asking for your experiences with a Facebook page for Friends. Bob received eight responses which he has summarised as follows:

The consensus is:

It's worth doing but takes time to build up 'likes'.

Unwanted posts not a problem and can be easily dealt with.

The majority of Friends are not Facebook users, but it is reaching younger age groups.

It is vital to update with new postings on a regular basis (at least weekly). Content can be upcoming events, what's in flower, interesting pictures and should not be just 'in house' items which are probably better in newsletters.

Persuade all your members who use Facebook to 'push' the Friends' Facebook page to create a ripple effect to 'spread the word'.

Don't rely on one person to do all the work – have at least three people posting on a regular basis.

If not sure how to start, co-opt a younger nerdish family member or friend.

It's probably a good idea to review how your group communicates - a combination of web site, newsletter, email, Facebook, Twitter, local press...

Have a go – there's little downside!

## Communications survey

The Communications Survey included in the November 2014 edition of *Campsis* was only completed by Friends of Geelong Botanic Gardens. FGBG is a very active group who are hosting the AAFBG Conference for the second time in 2016. I think you will find their responses below useful.

1. What communication tools are regularly used by your group, eg computer, phone, newsletter?  
*Computer, phone, website, newsletter, posters, banners, handbills, brochures, tourism publications*
2. Which computer network/s does your group use, eg email, Facebook, Twitter?  
*Email, Facebook*
3. Which is the most effective communication tool/s used by your group and why?  
*Email is quick for internal communication, and for reminding members of events. Facebook reaches a younger audience.*
4. Has your group had any problems communicating with your members or the wider community? If so, give examples.  
*We can never be certain that members read our newsletter or website, so limit reminder emails to avoid deluging members with messages and being ignored. Letters seemed to be of little use and are also kept to an absolute minimum. (They are also too expensive to send.) Whilst we are published in local newspapers from time to time, editors do not always represent us to the public properly.*
5. Does your garden have a system/regular contact for media? If so, what media is used eg newspapers, radio, magazines, brochures, and which are most successful?  
*Yes. We have an extensive media contact schedule, have been on radio three times this year, and appear in local newspapers to advertise events. Newspapers seem very effective, especially if a good journalist has written the article and large photos are included.*
6. How many members belong to your group?  
*We have 313 financial members (another 32 on our internal mail list and 86 on our network list). We are always working to encourage new membership, and would like to hear of new ways to build up the numbers.*

Approximately how much does your group spend per annum on your newsletters? \$.....  
*We have achieved a recent reduction from over \$6,000 per annum, since we encouraged members (and internal main and network people) to take the newsletter by email, or from the website. The amount is supplemented by \$10 per annum per member electing to receive the newsletter in hard copy by post (not all of whom have done so yet). See below.*

*All media:*

- *Geelong What's On - \$3000 pa,*
- *Internet, email, website, Facebook - \$1500 pa,*
- *Official Visitors Guide - \$820 pa*
- *Newsletter with postage and stationary - \$4500 pa (see above)*

7. When your group receives the AAFBG newsletter *Campsis* is it distributed to all your members? If so, how?

*Yes. Since your recent query, circulation has been checked, and as Campsis is received into our Office through Ro's email, it is to be delivered to all financial members, also by email.*

8. In addition to news from other members, what would you like to see in *Campsis*?

*Perhaps a Friends' 'Correspondence' page, or 'Letters to the Editor', where we can ask each other how to solve problems effectively, find a great tactic, or new idea for manageable events: a sort of helpful hints (being careful to guard against 'incriminating' issues).*

9. Does your group send your newsletter to AAFBG for distribution to other members by email?

*I believe that Campsis has been circulated only to Committee of Management members, but it will be circulated to all financial members now.*

10. Does your group like to receive regular copies of other members' newsletters by email?

*I am sure we do, and it is great for camaraderie, though reading all of them always is unlikely. Some members would not read them at all. (I guess we are all very busy and do what we can.)*

## Ro's adventures



Lilypad bridge at the Australian Garden at RGB Cranbourne. Photo by R.Noone.



Enjoying St Kilda Botanic Gardens, Melbourne. Photo by S. Noone.

In November I had a wonderful tour around the Australian Garden at RGB Cranbourne (approx 45 kms SE of Melbourne city) on board 'The Garden Explorer', a motorised people-mover that circulates around the Garden every 20 minutes. This makes much of the 363 hectare site accessible to everyone and provides the perfect answer to visitors who may be pressed for time. I was 'blown away' by the scope and beauty of Stage 2. In February I thoroughly enjoyed a birthday gathering on a perfect day in the RGB Melbourne. In March, I was enchanted by the St Kilda Botanical Gardens in inner Melbourne where I discovered many 'Garden Rooms', each with its own character. Patrons of all ages were enjoying picnics, baby groups, reading, sunbathing, the cool interior of the conservatory, exercise and even juggling!

Thank you to members who have paid their 2015 membership subscriptions. Many are still owing so please attend to this as soon as possible to help the Association continue its operations.

I hope to see many of you at the Ballarat Botanical Gardens on Friday 5 June for a morning of stimulating speakers and our AGM. Please reply to [info@friendsbotanicgardens.org](mailto:info@friendsbotanicgardens.org) by 29 May.

Remember to keep your eye on emails and the AAFBG website for events, new members, newsletters and links.

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## PROGRAM FOR AAFBG MEETING AND AGM FRIDAY 5 JUNE 2015

**VENUE:** Robert Clark Horticultural Centre, Ballarat Botanical Gardens  
Gillies Street North, Nth Ballarat, Victoria

- 9.00 am Refreshments
- 9.30 am Welcome by Elizabeth Gilfillan, Secretary AAFBG
- 9.35 am Launch of the Ballarat Educational Hub by Prof Tim Entwisle, Patron FBBG
- 9.45 am Presentation on the *Avenues of Honour 1915-2015* national project by Paul Jenkins, representing the project Committee
- 10.00 am Presentation and tour of Ballarat Botanical Gardens Fernery project by Elizabeth Gilfillan, FBBG Past-President and Project Convenor
- 10.15 am Tours of Ballarat Botanical Gardens by volunteer guides
- 11.15 am Annual General Meeting – all welcome
- 12.00 noon Lunch
- 1.15 pm AAFBG Committee Meeting
- 3.00 pm Close

**Reply** by 29 May to: [info@friendsbotanicgardens.org](mailto:info@friendsbotanicgardens.org)

**Contact:** Elizabeth Gilfillan: 0407 845 034

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## 2015 Australasian Conference of Volunteer Guides in Botanic Gardens Conference Registration Now Open

The Royal Botanic Gardens and Domain Trust will host the 2015 Australasian Conference of Volunteer Guides in Botanic Gardens in Sydney from 21 – 25 September.

Registration for our conference is now open. Early booking is recommended as all walks, talks and workshops have limited numbers. Book before 30 May and receive the Early Bird discount.

Guides attending the conference will have a choice of many events, including talks on biodiversity, management of heritage sites and the historical value of botanic gardens, and will be able to join guided walks featuring botanical and cultural themes.

This link to the page on the Sydney Gardens' website will guide you through the registration process, and also provide information about events in this conference: [www.rbg Syd.nsw.gov.au/guidesconference](http://www.rbg Syd.nsw.gov.au/guidesconference) Please pass this information on to Volunteer Guides in your organisation.

We look forward to hosting you in Sydney.

*Lynne Cusack, Head Guide, Volunteer Guides, The Royal Botanic Garden Sydney.*  
*Jim Nicol, Conference Convenor, The Royal Botanic Garden Sydney.*

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# Wattle it be for tea?

*Friends of the Australian Arid Lands Botanic Garden (AALBG)  
Port Augusta, South Australia*



Working on the Bush Tucker garden

Hmmmm...with the popularity of using native bush foods in cooking and growing native food plants in the home garden, as part of the AALBG Master Plan, the Bush Tucker area is being transformed to allow visitor access and interaction with the plantings, with a 'Touch, Taste and Smell' theme.

As you enter the garden there is a very large natural grove of one of Australia's best known and most popular bush foods, *Santalum acuminatum*, the Wild Peach or Quandong. A couple of the trees are overhanging the path, so when the trees are in fruit, visitors will be able to pick and sample the fruit, which contains twice as much vitamin C as an orange.

Down an incline you will see *Hakea leucoptera*, Needlebush, whose flowers were a favourite source of nectar for Aborigines. It was sucked directly from the flowers or added to water to make a sweet drink. When fermented, the nectar formed an alcoholic and very popular drink.

Next are two very large *Atriplex nummularia*, Old Man Saltbush. You may have seen 'Saltbush Lamb' in your local butchers, as the Old Man Saltbush is very widely used in sheep feedlots in many areas.

Coffee anyone? The seeds of *Acacia murrayana*, Murrays or Colony Wattle, were roasted or burnt by early settlers and then ground for use as a coffee substitute. The Aboriginal people soften the seeds with water to make an edible paste or they eat the seeds whole after roasting them in their pods.

*Marsdenia australis*, Native Pear, climbs over a dead *A. murrayana*, which protects the small avocado-like fruit of the pear. The sweet flowers and young fruits are eaten raw; the ripe fruit can be boiled or cooked in the ashes while leaves are steamed like spinach.

The Desert Lime, *Citrus glauca*, produces a yellow or green fruit, similar to a very small lemon, with rind and sour juicy flesh. It can make marmalade and jelly, and a refreshing drink, with sugar added. And you can make jam from the Native Fig, *Ficus brachypoda*, though the fruit are tiny, the size of a marble.

Another 'citrus' fruit is the Native Orange, *Capparis mitchellii*. Aboriginal people eat the flower buds and the fruit since its seeds are high in vitamin C, protein and thiamine. The fruit can be dried and stored for later use. As can the deep blue fruit of *Santalum lanceolatum*, the Wild Plum Bush, a small relative of the Quandong.

To end this walk, visitors can go to the Visitor Centre for desert lime, quandong or wattle seed flavoured ice cream, or scones with quandong jam, or buy some quandong leather or dried saltbush seasoning or get some recipes from the shop and make a traditional bush tucker treat at home.

*Deon Schumann, AALBG Collection Co-ordinator*



# *Luminous botanicus*

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



Jennifer Salkeld and a Friend making glass bottle lanterns (Jill More); Lanterns in the Gardens (David More); Austroraptor (Geoff Puleston)

In February and March this year Canberra had its Enlighten Festival when many of the national institutions, parliament, library, galleries, questacon, were illuminated with moving pictures. The ANBG joined in having its own *Luminous botanicus* over two weekends.

This event took much planning and preparation, all supervised by staff member Jennifer Salkeld, with the Friends spending many days making lanterns to hang along the paths. Not only did they make hundreds of lanterns, they lit the tea candles inside each lantern as evening fell and then they had to put them all out after the guests had gone, with some help from the Rangers.

At night each tour started in the Rainforest gully where the mist added to the mystery and the challenge of staying between the lights marking the edges of the 'boardwalk'. Green fronds loomed out of the dark; mushrooms of light glowed in the under storey; mirror-raindrops turned slowly. And then the beautiful music of flute and tuba came seeping through the rainforest.

Into the Gymnosperm forest, illuminated with strange white bulbous hanging lights, where three dinosaurs, loaned from the National Dinosaur Museum, loomed through the darkness. On to the Asteraceae Garden, where the real daisies were invisible but numerous bushes of daisy lights gleamed and a Mandolin Orchestra played softly in the background. On the Rock Garden lawn was a big red sign saying 'Enlighten', made of hundreds of Correa lights.

Up the hill to the Red Centre Garden, under stars hanging from the Eucalypts. All the gums around the western boundary of the Red Centre Garden were illuminated. The beat of the drums could be heard all the way up the path. There were three drummers and two fire gymnasts, all seeming very at home in the desert. The straggling crowd bunched up on the pavement and along the paths to enjoy this entertainment. At the end everyone got champagne and chocolates from the Friends and wandered back down the hill, very satisfied with this special experience.

We recommend a visit to Canberra next February to enjoy the wonders of Enlighten.

*Anne Rawson*



Friends making lanterns (Jill More); Lanterns in the Friends shelter (Graham Browne); Drummers and fire in the Red Centre (A. Tatnell).

# Celebrating 25 years

## *Friends of Botanic Gardens, Cairns Cairns, Queensland*

The weather was beautiful and the setting in the tropical gardens stunning when current and former Friends gathered late in 2014 to celebrate 25 years of voluntary service and fundraising for the Cairns Botanic Gardens.



Friends celebrating their 25<sup>th</sup> birthday with a tea party in the stunning grounds of the Cairns Botanic Gardens. Photo: Sybil Cumming.

Most of the Friends are usually working hard in some capacity—getting down and dirty, propagating plants, organising fund-raising events, selling plants, doing guided walks—so they enjoyed getting dressed up and being waited on at a celebratory morning tea party complete with long white tablecloths and tiers of cakes and finger food. The event honoured and recognised the hundreds of volunteers who have helped to make the Gardens so spectacular and also documented the various projects and initiatives that have been implemented over the years. Twenty-five year certificates were awarded to four members, Mary Gandini, Coralie Stuart, David Warmington and 91-year old Ray Church, who have totalled 100 years of uninterrupted voluntary service to the Gardens, and are still going.

It was good to take the time out to look back on some of the projects completed or funded by the Friends over the years. They include: a vertical garden created outside the shop; an overpass to allow endangered possums to cross a road; extensive rare plant purchases; bridges and boardwalk construction; display and interpretive signage; locally built and designed public seating and garden furniture; beautiful wrought iron entrance gates; shade sails; and the purchase of library and research resources such as cameras, microscopes, publications, computers etc.

One of the first actions of the Friends when they were established back in 1989 was to initiate a festival at the Gardens, Carnival on Collins, as a fundraiser and to showcase the Gardens. This festival is now so huge it is attended by up to 20,000 people each Father's Day and Council has taken over its organisation freeing up Friends to run a huge plant stall and raffles at the event. The Friends have initiated other events to promote the Gardens, partnering with a local film group to present outdoor films, 'Starry Night Cinema', and holding an annual Jazz Under the Stars event.

The various fund-raising exercises have raised several hundred thousand dollars and this year the Friends have been proud and pleased to contribute \$95,000 to the Cairns Regional Council towards a \$1 million conservatory scheduled to be opened in September 2015.

The Cairns Botanic Gardens have come a long way since they were established in 1885 after early settlers petitioned Cairns' very first council to set aside 70 acres near Edge Hill as a reserve for the use of the people in the new town. Travellers to Cairns regularly cite the Gardens as being a highlight of their visit and both Council and Friends take pride in presenting the Gardens in the best possible light to both tourists and locals of all ages.

*Val Schier, President*

For any further information about the Friends of the Cairns Botanic Gardens please visit the website [www.botanicfriendscairns.com.au](http://www.botanicfriendscairns.com.au), or email: [fobgcairns@bigpond.com](mailto:fobgcairns@bigpond.com) or check out and like our Face Book page.

# Giant plant sale and Easter Fair

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



Plant Sale in full swing and our 'WW I nurse' purveying Anzac Biscuits, Easter Saturday 2015. Photographer Peter Haughton.

Eurobodalla Regional Botanic Gardens (ERBG) Giant Plant Sale and Easter Fair, the Gardens' single biggest annual fund-raiser, was on again for young and old on Easter Saturday 4 April. Everything raised from the plant sale will swell the ERBG budget for the coming year. And all monies raised from the Friends' stalls will go towards building a new barbecue area.

Since the children's play space was installed three years ago, visitor numbers have risen from 25,000 to over 40,400 annually. So on a sunny weekend the existing two undercover free barbecues come under pressure; soon visitors will be able to book new ones for a small fee to gain exclusive use for their own group.

Our Treasurer Sue Cogger took on co-ordination of the Friends' stalls again this year, working closely with Gardens Manager, Michael Anlezark, who had overall responsibility. Friends would like to thank all the people involved with the Plant Sale and Fair for their generosity in time and donations, and for their community spirit. However, the person in charge of weather gets no thanks at all! While visitor numbers were down on last year we were still pleased with the financial result.

Gardens staff worked hard setting up, directing traffic and dismantling. Michael collected marquees and a click-clack machine for credit card sales, directed and worked with volunteers and staff. Propagators should be very proud of the quantity of plants that were out on display. Numbers of customers praised their quality, the range and how well organised it all was—they also loved the vintage click-clack machine!

Stewart Needham, chief wrangler for the kids' activities said 'Gnome painting was once again very popular with the kids, and several were repeat customers keen to improve on last year's attempt! Face painting was also popular, and at times our tent was chock-a-block with children and their parents. The (pre-war?) cabinet dryer used to dry the painted gnomes was essential—without it I doubt if any gnomes would have been ready for collection on the day.'

No-one went hungry. Cakes sold out soon after 1 pm. Sausages sizzled from 9.00 am to 2.00 pm, leaving just two loaves of bread and one pork sausage! Ten willing helpers worked flat out to feed the masses. On the Anzac Biscuits stall the theme of remembrance opened many conversations, and the 'Mrs. Patmore' or 'WW 1 nurse' outfit was a cause for much comment. Second-hand books sold briskly. Children's books ('Fill this box for \$10!') attracted small fry sporting their painted faces. One 10 year old persuaded his mother to buy a 500 piece jigsaw puzzle whose illustration showed nothing but Smarties!

After the exuberance of the Fair, Friends committee will return to concentrating on our long-term goal to enlarge and remodel the Visitors Centre, beginning with drafting the brief for an architect.

*Heather Haughton, President*

# New roles for Friends

## *Friends of Lismore Rainforest Botanic Garden Lismore, New South Wales*

As our Gardens mature, the focus of the Friends is moving from that of establishing to that of running the Gardens as a going concern. Of course, we still need the people who love to care for the plants but we also need to expand our thinking and develop programs that utilise the beautiful site our Gardens are becoming.

The Education area has almost taken off by itself, fuelled by the demands of the community. The Environment Education Centre, which we share with the adjacent Recycling and Recovery Centre, is an excellent base for many activities. Guided walks are always popular and we are planning a workshop for our guides later in the year. We have always had good information brochures, but now as more school groups want to visit, several of our members have moved into face to face teaching positions and love working with the children. But it is not only schools, recently we had a large U3A group who spent the day involved in learning activities and a group of local Aboriginal artists are planning a series of workshops, working with mostly local plant material. We are actively associated with the local Science Hub, the local TAFE, and several universities.

One of our assets is an established Hoop Pine (*Araucaria cunninghamii*) forest which was planted in 1984, a demonstration plot showing how exotic Camphor Laurel trees could be controlled with initial poisoning followed by interplanting with rainforest plants. The area is always shady and cool with magical areas where other indigenous plants have self established. It is a wonderful place to take visitors, particularly children, many of whom have never been in a forest before. We have a little teaching area in one of the clearings, cut logs as seats, and have plans for a looped path right through this forest. Recent research in Norway indicates that medication for mental health patients dropped by half after they participated in programs introducing them to taking regular walks in the woods. And this is a great place to walk.



The track in the Hoop Pine forest and school children at work in the forest

An established educational area is our Useful Plants Garden. Here we have plants used by the local indigenous people and early settlers for food, medicine, weapons, tools, shelter etc. We have large illustrated signs describing many of these plants and indicating where they can be found. Our Wilson Park Garden, a wonderful example of young dry rainforest, is an ideal area for those wanting to learn about establishing rainforest in their own home gardens or on larger properties. Our Uncommon Plants Garden is of special interest to those doing research into the rainforest plants which are sometimes difficult to find in the wild. And our Sensory Garden will be a place in which to learn on all levels.

Organising education programs is only one of our new roles and we have to do some very quick learning to discover how to fulfil these tasks.

*Marie Matthews*

# Big changes and new beginnings

## *Mackay Regional Botanic Gardens Friends Association Mackay, Queensland*

Our inspirational curator, Dale Arvidsson, has departed Mackay to take up a post as Curator of Mt. Coot-tha Botanic Gardens and the historic CBD Gardens in Brisbane after nine and a half years in the position here. He was the Visitor Services Officer for eighteen months prior to that. He will be very much missed, but we wish him well in his new venture.

Dale probably 'knew' almost every one of the thousands of plants growing in the Gardens and he played a very important role in the development of the Master Plan 2010. Four years of planning followed from this and tenders will soon be called for the Detailed Design project to complete the design for the rest of the Botanic Gardens. This work will be undertaken under the guidance of a new Advisory Board which includes the president of the MRBG Friends.

Friends are hoping that a new Curator will be appointed very soon and we look forward to working together for many years to come. In the meantime Team Leader Ross Demuth has been appointed Acting Curator, at a very busy time of the year.



Dale with departure gift and Friends identifying weeds. Photos by Maya Harrison.

This year has seen the commencement of the 'Wednesday Group' meeting at the Gardens meeting room on the first and third Wednesday of each month. VSO Maya Harrison is working hard to make these days interesting and productive. Many members who have not previously been actively involved are dropping in and making new friends. Among other activities, they are helping to make plant labels before positioning them in the beds (with supervision), thus learning to identify many of the species growing there. They have also been learning about weed identification (as well as helping to remove them), and taking photos of flowering plants in the Gardens. This will enable a series of 'What is flowering now' fact sheets to be produced. These drop in days have proved an excellent incentive for new members to join!

One of the early events on a crowded Friends Calendar was a serious weed identification and removal afternoon for the Friends group as a whole—a great success. We learnt to identify many of the weeds prevalent in the Gardens, then proceeded to gather many large bags of the offending plants. This was followed by some luscious food as a reward.

Once again we seem to have had a failed wet season, so volunteers have spent many hours watering to keep newly planted trees or shrubs alive. Thankfully we have also missed out on any cyclones and the damage they cause.

*Robin McWhinney. Secretary*

# Southern Africa comes to Melton!

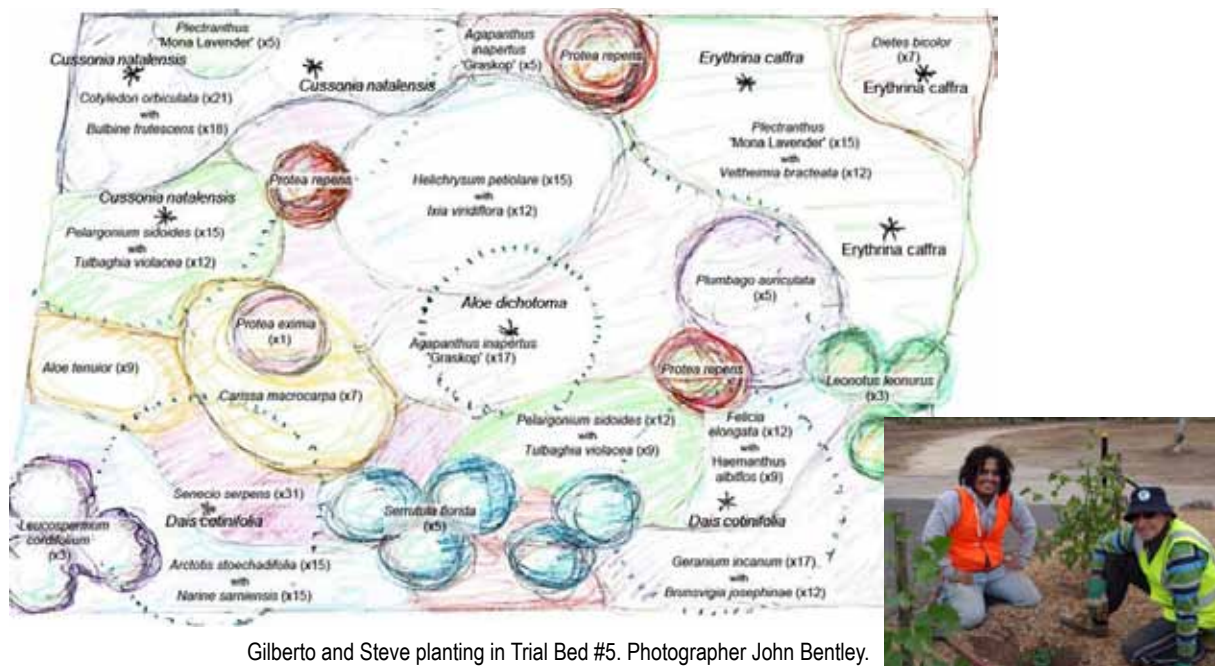
*Friends of the Melton Botanic Garden*  
*North-west of Melbourne, Victoria*

The latest development at Melton Botanic Garden is the commencement of planting in the trial beds of the Southern African Garden section. The Friends have been enthusiastically at work in the trial beds since late March and most of the 29 species proposed have been planted including aloes, pelargoniums and proteas. A layout plan of the trial beds showing all species can be found on the FMBG website [http://www.fmbg.org.au/southern\\_african.html](http://www.fmbg.org.au/southern_african.html)

Five trial beds, each 12 x 8 metres, consist of compost mixed with Melton soil in ratios of 10, 20, 30, 40 and 50 per cent compost. The species selected to represent southern African flora, with expert input from a landscape designer, have been planted in each bed and are being monitored to determine the optimal conditions for growth.

The remaining half hectare of the Southern African Garden has been landscaped, compost added to a depth of 20 cm and crushed rock walking paths have been constructed. As it arrives, mulch from the council is placed over the beds. As funding permits plants will be added to these main garden beds. Some areas will require the construction of raised beds and the addition of scoria or gravel to meet the growth needs of certain southern African plants.

## Southern African Trial Bed Planting Plan



Gilberto and Steve planting in Trial Bed #5. Photographer John Bentley.

CVGT (Australia), a local employment agency, has provided much support through a Work Experience Team in establishing the trial beds as well as the beds for the wider Southern African Garden with weed spraying, landscaping, fencing, composting, mulching and construction of pathways.

The Southern African Garden project is funded through the Victorian Government's Metropolitan Local Government Waste and Resource Recovery Fund. The grant covers ground preparation, compost, plants and interpretive signage and information. The compost is produced from green waste collected in the roadside green bins. The development is part of the Back to Earth Initiative between the FMBG and the Melton City Council. For more information on the Back to Earth Initiative follow this link: [http://www.melton.vic.gov.au/Services/Waste\\_and\\_recycling/Back\\_to\\_Earth\\_Initiative](http://www.melton.vic.gov.au/Services/Waste_and_recycling/Back_to_Earth_Initiative)

*Steve and Ella Parker, Friends of Melton BG*

# Propagating rare trees

## *Friends of the National Arboretum Canberra Canberra, ACT*

The National Arboretum Canberra has been increasing stocks of some of its rarest species. Initially just a few Franklin trees (*Franklinia alatamaha*) were available for planting in 2010. Most of these survived and earlier this year several of them flowered for the first time. Fifty cuttings were taken from these young trees, resulting in fifty new saplings—a 100 percent success rate!

This species was native to the coastal plains of Georgia, in the United States, where it grew in a small area of acidic bogs in the sand hills, but it has been extinct in the wild since the early 1800s. William Bartram, a Philadelphia botanist, collected Franklin tree seed between 1773 and 1776. He germinated these to produce his first flowering plants in 1781. All cultivated Franklin trees are descended from these plants.

The Friends now hold two-hour Working Bees at the Arboretum on Tuesday and Thursday mornings and there was no shortage of volunteers willing to plant out some of the new saplings.



The flowers of the Franklin tree are showy and approximately 9 cm in diameter. Photo: Jim and Bethany Plyer



Friends' volunteers ready to plant out some of the Franklin tree saplings on Thursday 5 March. The pink tree guard contains one of the trees planted in 2010. Photo: Mike Woolley

Arboretum staff have also been collecting and successfully germinating seeds from the Wollemi pines (*Wollemia nobilis*). Although many of the trees planted in the Wollemi forest failed to thrive, there is one area where many are over 2 metres tall, with two trees exceeding 3 metres. These are developing well and producing many cones.

As the Wollemi was discovered 21 years ago this year, an exhibition and seminar about this species is planned for Tree Week in July 2015. This Friends' initiative is being implemented at the Arboretum, with the support and collaboration of Arboretum staff.

### Other successes

More work has gone into drought-proofing the site. A bore was drilled which produces crystal-clear water at high pressure and testing proved it to be very suitable for watering trees. Consequently, late in 2014, a dam with 7 megalitres capacity was constructed to store the bore water. From there, it can be pumped uphill to a concrete reservoir concealed within Dairy Farmers Hill and then gravity-fed to the forests when required.

During February 2015, the Arboretum received its one millionth visitor since opening in February 2013.

*Linda Muldoon, Publications Editor*

# A second winning sculpture

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



Sculptor Orest Keywan introduces his sculpture 'And with a name to come' beside the billabong in Orange Botanic Gardens. Photographer: Libby West. The sculpture by Bondi beach in 2006 (from official website at <http://www.sculpturebythesea.com/exhibitions/bondi/awards>)

A second winning sculpture from Bondi's Sculptures by the Sea has now been installed in the Orange Botanic Gardens. We now have the 2006 and 2007 winners on show, both generously donated by NAB. Enigmatically named 'And with a name to come', the sculpture is by Orest Keywan and now takes pride of place in the centre of the billabong where it looks very much at home and serves as a perch for one of our local cormorants. Installation of the sculpture in the water was a bit of a challenge and required input from an expert engineer but the result has added something very special to our water feature.

Our Growing Friends group now has a Memorandum of Understanding covering its work in the propagation area and this gives them the freedom to operate without direct supervision from staff of Orange City Council. We are now working towards a more wide-ranging agreement covering work in the Gardens generally. We thank those other Friends groups who have sent copies of their MOUs to us to see how other groups have set up their associations with their local councils. Discussions on this will no doubt continue for some time.

Orange City Council has released a draft Master Plan covering what is termed the 'Botanic Gardens Precinct' which covers areas adjacent to our Gardens, including the popular Adventure Playground, a parcel of land to the northwest of the OBG car park known as 'The Triangle', Patmos Gardens Café and historic Emmaville Cottage. The Master Plan includes a proposal to build a convention centre and boutique hotel on The Triangle to take advantage of the views across Orange to Mt Canobolas. While the concept will enhance the entrance to the Gardens, the detail of the proposal will need to be checked once a development application is submitted. Realignment of the access road into the Gardens, upgrading of the car park and establishment of a vista leading towards the Gardens entrance are all welcome inclusions in the Master Plan. Enlargement of the Clover Hill Function Centre, which is situated within the Gardens themselves, to a proposed 250 seat privately run function centre and café is considered by the Friends to be a less welcome proposal as such a development may detract from the Gardens.

*Murray Fletcher*



# We love tours...and so do our members!

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



Blue Mosque, Istanbul, Turkey.



Traditional Icelandic home. Photo credit World Expeditions.



Aerial view of the remote Na Pali Coastline Kauai, Hawaii. Photo by shuttlecock.

*Foundation and Friends of the Botanic Gardens* have been running tours for our members since the late 90s. Since then the tours program has expanded greatly to include well known garden destinations in Europe and the United Kingdom as well as the more exotic locations such as Peru, the Galapagos Islands, Iceland and Madagascar.

*Foundation & Friends* organise tours for the enjoyment of our members. The members also appreciate knowing that the proceeds from the tours assists us to continue to support the work in horticulture, science, education and conservation at the Royal Botanic Garden in Sydney, the National Herbarium of NSW, the gardens in the Blue Mountains at Mount Tomah, and the Australian Botanic Garden at Mount Annan.

Our members' interests are diverse and wide ranging so the tours typically include not only gardens, landscapes and botany, but also history, art and architecture. The success can be attributed to offering small group experiences with like-minded people. *Foundation & Friends* also prides itself on finding the right person to escort each tour; they must enjoy travelling, and be lovers of plants, gardens and gardening. Here's a snapshot of some of the wonderful escorts.

**Sandy Pratten** has been director of her own Landscape Design business for more than 25 years and trained at Ryde College of Horticulture. She grew up in Sydney, lived 20 years in rural NSW, and has now returned. She is a guide at The Royal Botanic Garden in Sydney and has lectured in horticulture for over 15 years. She is passionate about travelling and exploring new landscapes, and a professional artist. She is interested in the sense of place in a country and the culture as a whole which contributes to the land use. Sandy has led trips for *Foundation & Friends* to India, Sri Lanka, Morocco, Mexico, Cuba and Myanmar.

**Jennie Churchill** is a veterinarian and a gardener. Her career has always combined a passion for flora and fauna. In her gardening career she is best known for her role as a presenter on ABC TV's Gardening Australia, and as co-author of two books on Edna Walling. An experienced tour leader, Jennie has escorted groups to European and English gardens, Nepal and Antarctica. In 2013 she worked with both *Foundation & Friends* and World Expeditions and escorted a trip to Iran and Turkey and in 2014, the Galapagos Islands and Ecuador. Jennie is also a *Foundation & Friends* Board Member.

**Tim Jackson** was president of The Friends from 2001 to 2003 and was the organisation's very first tour escort! She has escorted many trips for the organisation, domestic and international including *Foundation & Friends* most successful trip to visit Highgrove House, the family residence of Charles, Prince of Wales, which saw a group of 40 people divided into two buses. Tim recently escorted two very successful short breaks to the Southern Highlands and The Blue Mountains.

We have many wonderful tours coming up to far away and interesting destinations including Iceland, Hawaii, Jordan and Turkey, Madagascar, and Sicily and Malta!

For more details visit <http://bit.ly/1ELIsPr>

*Lyn Johnson*

# Governor opens Friends centre

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



A full house; the Governor cuts the ribbon; Rodger and Gwen Elliot with the Governor and Mrs Chernov.

On 1 February 2015 the Governor of Victoria, Alex Chernov AC QC and his wife Elizabeth Chernov, opened the Elliot Centre and Growing Friends Nursery for the Royal Botanic Gardens at Cranbourne. Past and present office holders, Council personnel and at least 200 Friends joined to welcome our guests and to enjoy a memorable event. There was standing room only! The Governor was enthusiastic about the initial impact of the Red Sand Garden when arriving at the Australia Garden.

After morning tea, the official party then toured through the Australia Garden on the Garden Explorer to the Elliot Centre and Growing Friends Nursery to cut the ribbons and declare those facilities open. The Friends were particularly pleased to have such wonderful facilities dedicated to their use. The Centre, comprising a meeting room, library, office and store rooms and Herbarium (still under development), recognises the enormous contribution Gwen and Rodger Elliot have made to the Gardens.

Both are Members of the Order of Australia (AM) recognising their contribution to horticulture and their contributions to the Royal Botanic Gardens at Melbourne and Cranbourne. In 2014 they were awarded the Gold Laurel Award from the Australian Horticulture Media Association for their work in horticulture and media with 35 books, including nine volumes of *Encyclopaedia of Australian Plants*.

The official party, and many Friends, inspected the displays from all the Friends Groups. All members of the official party were very interested in the quality and scope of the work being carried out. The tour and displays included:

- The Growing Friends Nursery displayed how Australian plants are propagated ready for three plant sales per year.
- Botanical Fabricators displayed items made for sale using Australian themed materials, particularly in quilts made for the Quilt Exhibition each March.
- Botanical Illustrators showed the range and quality of their paintings and there were two paintings from the Cranbourne Collection of 39 botanical paintings and drawings.
- The Herbarium Collectors make plant collections from the 363 ha site and mount the specimens for educational use and for the State Collection at the Melbourne Herbarium.
- Friends in Focus operated a slide show featuring the flora and fauna at the Gardens.
- Botanical Basket Makers displayed a collection of their works.
- The Seed Collectors set out the stages of collecting, sorting and propagating from Australian plants.
- The Friends Library was open and the Governor and Mrs Chernov were escorted through the collection.

Cranbourne Friends have grown in numbers and strength largely thanks to the enthusiasm for the Gardens that are now recognised as being world class. Apart from the groups listed, the Friends organise an annual program of lectures, discovery days and tours. With funds raised by all the Friends groups, FRBGC had accumulated funds so the total cost of more than \$200,000 for these new facilities was covered, without imposing on RBGC.

*Wendy Smart*

# Forty-nine Friends give 1,000 years!

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

At our annual meeting forty nine Members of the Friends were recognised with Volunteer Service Awards for continuous voluntary contributions to the Friends' work—ten for 10 years, ten for 15 years, nine for 20 years, ten for 25 years and ten for 30 years—a total of almost 1,000 years!

The individual efforts of our Growing Friends added up to a record profit of \$29,000 from the two-day plant sale last spring. A similar result was achieved by our talented artists from their major Botanical Illustration exhibition in November. As usual, the Friends gave \$5,000 to the Director to purchase works from the Exhibition to add to the State Botanical Collection.

Our Friends' talks program has covered a wide range of topics recently. A naturalist shared his photographs of Australian flora amassed over his 40 years of bushwalking. (He has recently donated 13,000 images to the Gardens.) Another presentation tackled the challenge to the City of Melbourne's environment caused by population growth, urban heating and climate change. We also learned about vertical gardens, bees both native and exotic, and garden design with an artist's eye.



### Other events and developments:

- Within the allotted hour of two twilight walks, 32 birds were glimpsed and heard and some of their discreet hide-aways discovered.
  - The Governor General, Sir Peter Cosgrove, planted a Gallipoli Oak in the Gardens.
  - Visitors speaking English or Chinese can converse with virtual fairies at seven stopping places on the Gardens' new commercial venture, the Disney Fairy Trail. It links technology with horticulture and education via an app.
  - The Garden Explorer people mover provides seven points for a daily 'hop on and hop off' service, complete with commentary, every hour.
  - Friends have financed the new steel boardwalk in Fern Gully, the first stage in its revitalisation.
- Phryne Fisher solved a murder that happened at Gardens House in Episode 8 of the new ABC series.
  - The Friends' Scholarship Scheme awarded scholarships worth \$9,000 to the Manager of Public Programs in Melbourne to attend an international conference and to two Cranbourne staff to further their qualifications.

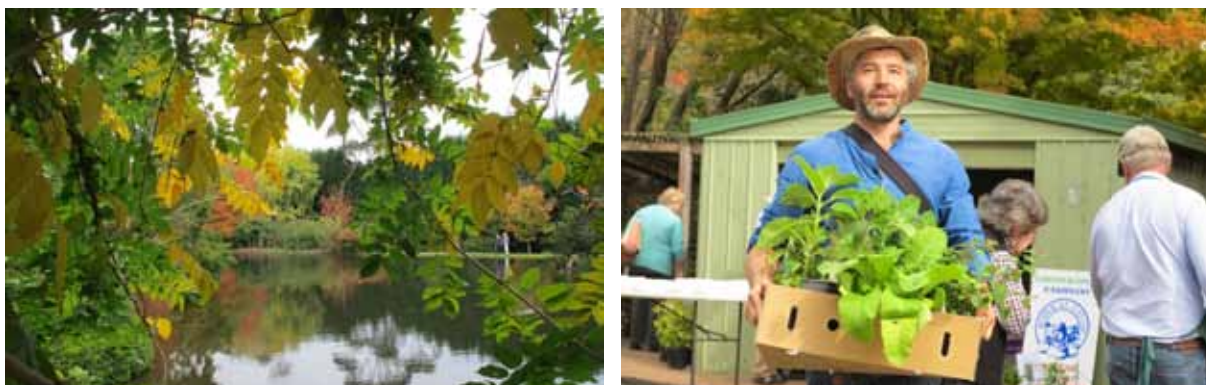
Imagine living on the Gaza Strip, the dry, barren, war-torn sandy area between Israel, the Mediterranean Sea and Egypt. In May 2013 two Gardens staff, Andrew Laidlaw and Peter Symes, were part of a Global Gardens of Peace delegation that resolved to create a green space there for family well-being, where children could safely play in a healthy environment. With RBG backing, Andrew and Peter have drawn up a design concept using grass, West Australian species and Middle Eastern flora. A desalination plant will be vital. They gave an absorbing talk to the Friends late last year and are about to make a personal visit to Gaza to advance the project, which has a good prospect for international funding.

Back in Melbourne, despite every possible care, the iconic Separation Tree has finally succumbed to two attacks of vandalism. Many seedlings have been raised and saplings planted to maintain the lineage of this 400-year old River Red Gum. Its name commemorates the 1850 separation of the colonies of New South Wales and Victoria.

*Heather Ironmonger*

# Autumn gardens weekend

*Friends of the Southern Highlands Botanic Gardens  
Moss Vale, New South Wales*



The lake at 'Bellagio' and happy consumer at the plant sale. Photographer: Chris Blaxland.

The Friends of the SHBG raised \$60,000 at the Autumn Gardens Weekend (18-19 April 2015) with eight open gardens, a huge plant sale and a veritable army of volunteers. Fortunately the NSW 'Storm of the Decade' didn't sweep across the region until 24 hours later. It started to drizzle after lunch on the Sunday but by then many of the visitors had enjoyed the delights of the gardens and bought their plants. The Southern Highlands is renowned for its beautiful cool climate gardens with the autumn season creating a landscape of changing colours and delightful vistas. We had more than three thousand visitors from around New South Wales as well as locals enjoying the delights of the weekend.

The SHBG Friends Plant Growers Group excelled itself this year, producing a huge number of plants, many of which are rare, unusual or difficult to find in the commercial nurseries. There were trees, shrubs, herbaceous, natives, perennials, bulbs and groundcovers—all propagated and nurtured by the Friends. The opening of the plant sale at 9 am on Saturday was a sight to behold—likened to that of the Boxing Day rush at David Jones! Held at one of the eight open gardens, 'Quindalup', Bowral, where the owner had previously run a nursery of rare plants, the space is perfect for a 'pop-up' nursery with plenty of public access. An added attraction is the 10-acre garden filled with specimen trees and shrubs, with sweeping lawns and beautifully planted borders.

The two country properties, 'Arcadia' on the outskirts of the village of Berrima and 'Upper Woodlands' at High Range, proved popular. The former is a 90-acre farming property with cattle beyond the garden gate, and has a two-acre garden filled with mature exotic trees surrounded by paddocks. 'Upper Woodlands' has evolved over the last twenty-six years as a six-acre woodland park with an ornamental dam, Ha-ha, colonnade and valley walk.

Of the five remaining gardens, four are nestled in the leafy suburb of Burradoo in Bowral. 'Vine Cottage' and the neighbouring 'Three Secret Gardens' (as we termed them) are each beautifully designed and presented. Each has its own charm with established trees, garden rooms and special features. The outbuildings in the 'Vine Cottage' garden fascinated many of the visitors and there, in one of the sheds, floral art was displayed.

The last property, 'Bellagio' in East Bowral, has been developed over the last 12 years on a sloping five-acre site. Italianate in design, the owners were inspired by a trip to Lake Como, northern Italy. There are formal house gardens, a covered vegetable garden, expansive lawns, and a crescent-shaped lake that curves round two sides of the house. It is an inspirational garden and many of the visitors wrote glowing comments as they left at the gate.

The Friends of SHBG gratefully acknowledge the generosity of all the owners of these eight properties in opening their private gardens.

*Dr Meg Probyn, Friends of SHBG committee*

# Water still a problem

## *Friends of Tamworth Regional Botanic Garden Tamworth, New South Wales*

Friends of Tamworth Regional Botanic Garden have experienced what we might call a quiet phase over the last six months. The combination of hot dry weather and water restrictions have curtailed our plant propagation activities somewhat. We resumed working bees a bit later than usual in 2015, and have postponed our spring open day and plant sale, hoping for better conditions later in the year to encourage a good attendance and a successful sale day when it is held. There was some discussion recently about manning the kiosk for a few hours or days a week, but we really need more volunteers to be able to take that on again. Member numbers remain low.

The Asian garden is taking shape. The bore is almost ready to get up and running. It will be solar powered, so the dependence on both town water and electricity supply will both be dramatically reduced when it is supplying water to keep the dam level maintained and support water reticulation through the ponds as well. There is further hard landscaping to be completed, with construction of a dry creek bed at the top of the dam. This will be part of the drainage system, but still look attractive at times when there is no water present. The gully is to be filled, bringing the ground level up, and there will be further plantings to complement the existing Wollemi pines which have done very well in their gully location.

The oriental style gazebo has been stained in a darker colour more suited to the landscape—that was a great improvement. Additional timber retaining walls have been built below the gazebo, edging the pathway that will wind around the edge of the water. A whimsical touch, in keeping with the theme, will be provided by a Japanese style bridge to be built below the gazebo. Luckily there have been few losses among the plants already put in, and these are progressing well, providing shade for the plants yet to be introduced. In autumn there will be more camellias added. The funds donated specifically for the area have almost been expended, but the Friends should be able to donate a little more for plants or landscape features if required.

The Friendship Force Group brought up their Japanese guests who planted mondo grass in the Japanese section of the Asian garden. The Mayor and Country Music Ambassador from our sister city Gore in New Zealand visited and planted a tree indigenous to New Zealand in the Gore Garden.

Our collaboration with the Australian Plants Society for the Threatened Species Project is continuing. Some plants were lost over the summer, but generally most of the species planted have thrived and are making good growth.

This year marks the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the formation of our group. We are currently operating with the bare minimum of committee members. Hopefully interest in supporting our botanic garden will increase and the group can continue for many years to come.



Bamboo Walk and a path under construction. Photographer Christine Reeves.

# Greetings from Scotland!

## *Friends of Royal Botanic Gardens Edinburgh Edinburgh, Scotland, UK*

Friends of the Royal Botanic Gardens Edinburgh (RBGE) were delighted to be accepted as Affiliate Members of the Australian Association of Friends of Australian Botanic Gardens in 2014, joining three other affiliate members in South Africa, Fiji and New Zealand. Already this new network has been active with Edinburgh Friends RBGE welcoming visitors (Kate and Alan Heffernan) from the Gold Coast Regional Botanic Gardens in April 2015, just in time for the Edinburgh Friends AGM!

The Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh comprises four gardens: Edinburgh, Dawyck (Borders), Logan (Dumfries and Galloway) and Benmore (Argyll and Clyde). Each Garden has its own distinctive flora. Edinburgh Friends RBGE was established in 1991 by a group of supporters, led by Lady Margaret Elliott, a member of the RBGE Board of Trustees. The aims of the Friends were three fold:

- To raise the profile of the RBGE
- To encourage membership of the RBGE
- To raise funds to support the RBGE

From the initial meeting, attended by 250 people in the lecture theatre at the RBGE, the number of Friends has grown until the present day when numbers are approaching 8000. Over the past 24 years, the Friends have raised funds through running a series of lectures, events, plant sales, and tours throughout the year. In 1992, the Friends had raised £1500 for the RBGE in their first year. This year (2014-15) the Friends have raised over £34,000 for the Gardens. The most productive fund-raising event is the annual Plant Sale in May where over £12,000 is usually raised in two hours, from plant and home-baking sales! However, the tours, one day, three to four day, and overseas, also raise a substantial amount of money. And increasingly, though talks still feature in the yearly program, the Friends are now moving to organising events e.g. Silent Movie evenings with live music and Jazz evenings in the RBGE iconic Palmhouse.

The funds are used to support a variety of projects – derived from either the Horticulture, Science or Education divisions and from each of the regional gardens. For example, the Friends have recently provided the funding for two Bhutanese Chortens in the Bhutanese area in the Benmore Garden.

The Edinburgh Friends are now looking forward to their 25<sup>th</sup> birthday in October 2016 when we anticipate holding a number of events to celebrate this milestone. The Friends also look forward to receiving more visitors from Australia in the future. And it is highly probable that there will be visitors from Scotland who will want to explore the wide variety of Australian Botanic Gardens and meet their Friends!

*Shiona Mackie, Convener, Edinburgh Friends RBGE*



Plant sale in Edinburgh



Kate Heffernan and husband Alan Donaldson, third and fourth from left, with Edinburgh Friends.



## Australian Association of Friends of Botanic Gardens Biennial Conference Hosting Requirements and Information

### General Information

- Held approximately every two years over a weekend, Friday evening to Sunday afternoon to ensure maximum attendance.
- Generally autumn or spring, or whichever month maximizes the best season for the garden/region.
- Friday evening- opening welcome and registration option.
- Saturday evening - Conference dinner with relevant speaker.
- Sunday- formal closing.
- Venue to include display space for members posters, newsletters etc.
- Opportunities for tours of the garden and other areas of special interest during the conference
- Pre & post conference tour options
- The AAFBG logo to be included on any conference material
- A short presentation is to be given at the preceding conference to inform members of basic plans

### Invitation for Applications

A formal notice calling for applications will be sent to all AAFBG members at least six months before the next conference is due. This will include:

- a. the closing date for applications which must be made in writing or electronically
- b. the date of announcement of the decision by AAFBG Committee to be advised in writing or electronically

### Conference Program

The Conference theme, keynote, content, speaker selection, style, order and type of presentations etc. are determined by the hosting group.

Historically speakers have been experienced and of a very high standard.

Hosts are given a great opportunity to display your garden, region, point of difference and special achievements

### Program Inclusions:

- Friday evening - Opening, welcome and registration option
- Saturday - Time allocated for AAFBG Annual General Meeting
- Saturday evening - Conference dinner with guest speaker
- Sunday afternoon - Announcement of next conference host
- A short presentation from the next conference host
- Farewell and formal thanks to outgoing President
- Formal welcome to incoming President
- Closing and formal farewell to delegates

- No specific time - An opportunity for AAFBG members to present short reports
- An opportunity for BGANZ representative to speak
- Question time for delegates

### **Conference Registration**

Sponsorship and Council support is generally necessary to mitigate conference costs. Registration fees need to be held at reasonable level to secure numbers, as the majority of our delegates are volunteers and/or retired, with travel and accommodation costs to also consider. Speakers' attendance is complimentary and may include a dinner guest. Individual speakers' fees, accommodation and travel expenses may need to be determined.

### **Financial Reporting and Surplus**

A statement of Income and Expenditure is provided to AAFBG within three months following the Conference.

50% of operating surplus is returned to AAFBG to assist with running costs. Where a surplus is minimal, AAFBG may consider waiving the 50% contribution. In the unlikely event of there being no surplus, any loss is to be borne by the hosting Friends group.

### **AAFBG Publicity and Assistance**

Opportunity for publicity through AAFBG website and admin email circulation, Campsis and BGANZ.

Recent hosting groups (Pt Augusta, Gold Coast and Geelong) would be happy to answer questions and offer advice. Contact with the AAFBG is maintained throughout the planning process.

### **AAFBG Committee Membership**

Historically a representative/s of the Friends hosting group is/are nominated to the AAFBG Committee of Management commencing at the AGM held at the previous Conference.

This includes a non-binding expectation that a member of the hosting group executive be prepared to accept the AAFBG presidency for a period of 2 years from the time of the host's conference and AGM until transfer to the next conference host.

This process has provided an opportunity for Representatives of Friends of Botanic Gardens across Australia to become more closely involved with the AAFBG over a longer period of time, enabling a broader COM perspective providing a valuable contribution to the life of the organisation.

AAFBG Inc. is Victoria-based and contracts an Administration Officer to manage day to day procedures, minutes, general communication with President, Committee and members, and website updates, teleconference set-up etc. Committee meetings are held as teleconferences.

See attached AAFBG President's role.

### **Letter of Confirmation**

A Letter of Confirmation will be forwarded by the AAFBG to the selected conference host.

*President: Kate Heffernan*  
*Admin Officer: Ro Noone*  
*Address: PO Box 983, Geelong VIC 3220*  
*AAFBG: ABN 99467025064; Inc. A0026805Z*  
*email: [info@friendsbotanicgardens.org](mailto:info@friendsbotanicgardens.org)*  
*Web: [www.friendsbotanicgardens.org](http://www.friendsbotanicgardens.org)*





**APPLICATION TO HOST  
THE AUSTRALIAN ASSOCIATION OF FRIENDS OF  
BOTANIC GARDENS CONFERENCE IN 2018**

Closing date for 2016 Conference: December 15<sup>th</sup> 2015  
Forward by email to: [info@friendsbotanicgardens.org](mailto:info@friendsbotanicgardens.org)  
Decision Advised: January 15<sup>th</sup> 2016

Name of Organisation: .....

Contact..... Position: .....

Contact Ph: .....Email: .....

Key members of Organising Committee: .....

.....

Suggested Conference Month or Dates for 2018 Conference: .....

Conference Venue (Minimum capacity 150): .....

Dinner Venue (Minimum capacity 200): .....

Council Support and Other Sponsorship: .....

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Accommodation Availability: .....

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Pre and Post Conference Tour Opportunities: .....

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Any Other Information to Support your Submission: .....

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On behalf of .....(Friends Group),

I accept the hosting requirements and responsibilities as set out in Australian Association of Friends of Botanic Gardens Biennial Conference Hosting Requirements and Information.

.....	.....	.....
Signed by the Applicant	Position	Date

*President: Kate Heffernan*  
*Admin Officer: Ro Noone*  
 Address: PO Box 983, Geelong VIC 3220  
 AAFBG: ABN 99467025064; Inc. A0026805Z  
 email: [info@friendsbotanicgardens.org](mailto:info@friendsbotanicgardens.org)  
 Web: [www.friendsbotanicgardens.org](http://www.friendsbotanicgardens.org)

# Members of Association of Friends of Botanic Gardens Inc

Go to [www.friendsbotanicgardens.org](http://www.friendsbotanicgardens.org) for email addresses and phone numbers

## 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.

Dubbo Regional Botanic Garden, Friends of. P O Box 81, Dubbo NSW 2830.

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, Moss Vale NSW 2577.

Stony Range Regional Botanic Garden, Advisory Committee. 810 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 Coon-tha Botanic Gardens, Mt Coon-tha Road, Toowong QLD 4066

Cairns Botanic Gardens, Friends of. PO Box 223, Edge Hill QLD 4870.

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, Queens Domain, 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 Gardens, Friends of. 71 Napoleon Cres. White Hills 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.

Camperdown Botanic Gardens and Arboretum Trust, Friends of. PO Box 270, Camperdown VIC 3260

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.

Queen Mary Gardens, Friends of. PO Box 146, St Arnaud VIC 3478

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  
Royal Botanic Gardens Edinburgh, Friends. Membership Office, RBGE, 201 Inverleith Row, Edinburgh, EH3 5LR, Scotland, UK.  
Thurston Gardens, Cakobau Rd, Suva, Fiji.

## Total

58 Members, 4 Affiliate Members

## Calendar of events 2015

**AAFBG AGM**, Presentations, Tour and Lunch, Ballarat Botanical Gardens, Victoria, 5th June 2015

Speakers include Prof Tim Entwisle, Patron of FBBG and Director of RBG Melbourne, Paul Jenkins OAM, Committee of Avenues of Honour Project, and Elizabeth Gilfillan, Convenor of Ballarat BG Fernery Project  
RSVP by 29 May to: [info@friendsbotanicgardens.org](mailto:info@friendsbotanicgardens.org)

## Australasian Conference of Volunteer Guides in Botanic Gardens

“Guiding in a changing climate” to be held from Monday 21 to Friday 25 September (inclusive) in Sydney.

“The conference will highlight the extensive plant collections of the Royal Botanic Gardens and Domain Trust, discuss current botanical research; explore issue of climate change; and provide opportunities for an exchange of ideas between volunteer guides in botanic gardens.”

**7th BGANZ Congress**, Wollongong, NSW, 25 October to 29 October

“Connecting with Communities”.

Visit the website: <http://bganz.org.au/index.php/7th-bganz-congress> for full details.

## Websites worth visiting

Visit our website:

[www.friendsbotanicgardens.org](http://www.friendsbotanicgardens.org)

Contact website editor to list your events or add garden photos to the members' gallery:  
[info@WordsWorthcommunicating.com](mailto:info@WordsWorthcommunicating.com)

BGANZ on line Newsletter – *The Botanic Garden*  
[www.bganz.org.au/newsletter](http://www.bganz.org.au/newsletter)

Botanic Gardens Conservation International  
<http://bgci.org/resources/news>

Garden Plant Conservation Association of Australia  
[www.gpcaa.com](http://www.gpcaa.com)

Weeds Australia  
[www.weeds.org.au](http://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 (concluding in May 2015): [www.opengarden.org.au](http://www.opengarden.org.au)

Fungimap:  
[www.rbg.vic.gov.au/fungimap/home](http://www.rbg.vic.gov.au/fungimap/home)

Plants for the Planet:  
[www.plantsfortheplanet.com](http://www.plantsfortheplanet.com)

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