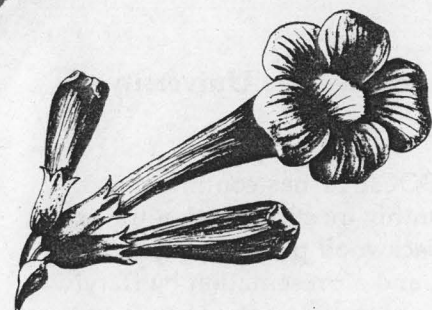


Campsis

Newsletter of the
Association of Friends of Botanic Gardens (Victoria) Inc.

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Campsis radicans (Trumpet Flower)
del. Beverley Graham 1994

From the President

THE OCTOBER MEETING of the Association Committee was held in Gisborne at the Shire Council Chambers on a very wet day, brightened by the hospitality of the Gisborne Friends. The Committee agreed to a request of the Geelong Friends that a letter be sent to the City of Greater Geelong, supporting their concern regarding implementation of the Masterplan. The Council had frozen the Masterplan and the funds set aside for the design, development and documentation of Stage 1. That Stage would reconnect the Gardens and the waterfront at Eastern Beach. The Geelong Friends also drew attention to the lack of a Director/Manager/Curator.

The City replied that budgeted funds would only be used for expenditure relating to the Botanic Gardens and Eastern Park, and that the Chief Executive Officer had been asked to consider recruiting a full-time Director of Parks and Gardens.

As the Geelong Botanic Gardens will be celebrating their 150th anniversary in 2001 we are delighted that the Geelong Friends will be hosting the Association's conference in that year.

The news that Minister Maclellan had rejected the proposal to put a 4-lane road through the Cranbourne Botanic Gardens was especially pleasing, and we congratulate the Cranbourne Friends, who worked tirelessly to help achieve this end. The previous road reservation has been rescinded and the land reserved for the Gardens.

Planning for the Warrnambool Conference next month is going ahead at full speed. We have had to move the Saturday night dinner from the Mahogany Ship restaurant to the Mid-City Motor Inn because of renovations and a change of ownership. The program of the

Conference has been extended to include a tour of the Koroit and Port Fairy Botanic Gardens, which are both within 20km of Warrnambool. The program is a full one, but time has been allowed for Friends' reports and discussions. We would be glad to receive written reports from Friends groups (to be included in the Conference kit) before the end of March and, so that the time can be shared appropriately, no more than six slides each for presentation at the Conference.

We hope to see many Friends at the Conference. Invitations have been sent far and wide to a diverse range of lovers of gardens. We look forward to welcoming you all to Warrnambool in April.

Marie Ziebell

Friends of Warrnambool Botanic Gardens

OUR ACTIVITIES for the past few months have been taken up organising the annual Conference for 17-18 April. Speakers have been booked, venues confirmed and tours planned. Our Gardens and those of Koroit and Port Fairy were all established in the 19th century. A post-Conference tour is planned for the Shipwreck Coast and surrounding countryside, with lunch at historic Glenample Homestead, near Princetown, followed by a visit to 'Three Oaks', a country garden, and Timboon Farmhouse Cheese.

On 17 January we had a most enjoyable Family Picnic Day in the Gardens, raising \$326 from the sale of plants, afternoon teas and a raffle. The Warrnambool Pipe Band played under shady trees by the lake; the Warrnambool City Band played from our newly restored and painted rotunda. Free guided tours by our recently trained guides were available.

The Growing Friends continue their work in the Curator's cottage garden, restoring the beds to their original state and clearing old paths. They plan to restore the beds at the main entrance to the Gardens, following the original plan. The fernery is undergoing restoration and will be replanted with ferns and palms, one section being devoted to plants indigenous to the Otway Ranges. We are fortunate to have several planted there, already well established. Others will be added soon, together with an additional watering system.

Five memorial garden seats have been ordered for the Gardens and will be placed near the rotunda. Labelling of the trees and plants in the Gardens continues, a task that will continue for some time.

Marigold Curtis

Friends of the Botanic Gardens, Gisborne, New Zealand

THERE IS NOW A COMMITTEE who are dedicated to helping with improvements in the Gardens, both by raising funds and raising the public awareness of what is going on in the Gardens.

The Gisborne Australia segment now has Australian plants. Some are species of the area where the Australian Gisborne is. There is more work to be done in this area. Other segments of the Gardens include a Japanese garden for our sister city Nonoichi, with a pond that has been cleared, rocks placed round the perimeter and an island with a pebble garden. A second stage is under way with the laying of paths.

Plans are afoot for signs and location maps, for which we have obtained a grant.

Our third sister city is Palm Desert, California, and we are planning around an existing cactus collection in a glass-house and a bird aviary, as there is a wild-life sanctuary in Palm Desert, called the Living Desert.

We are very pleased to have formed such close links with the Gardens in our three sister cities.

Dorothy McCulloch

Friends of the Grounds, The University of Melbourne

THE FRIENDS SOCIETY has continued its series of bi-monthly meetings with a trip to the University's Blackwood properties and the Garden of St Erth, and a presentation by Daryl Jackson, who was appointed as the University's Master Planner in mid-1998.

The Annual General Meeting held at the end of November ratified the constitution, appointed the Committee for 1999 and enjoyed an outline by Maurice Pawsey of the background to several items of interest within the University grounds.

Planning for future meetings, held on the first Wednesday of every second month, includes:

7 April Tour of Newman College, including the Chapel

2 June The University's Antiquarian Horticultural Books

4 August History of the System Garden

6 October Visit to the University's Burnley Campus.

Further details can be obtained from Ms F de Preu, Grounds Manager, The University of Melbourne (9344 4212) or the Secretary, Mr W Pye (5424 1725).

Bill Pye

Friends of the Royal Botanic Gardens, Melbourne

THE COMPLAINT THAT the Royal Botanic Gardens lacked a defined entrance no longer holds, although paradoxically it is buildings rather than plants that are destined to entice visitors into the Gardens. The Premier of Victoria, the Hon. Jeff Kennett, will officially open Observatory Gate on 10 March, enabling public viewing of the historic Melbourne Observatory buildings that lost their original function in 1944. A newly-constructed visitor centre, shop, cafe and plaza will provide valuable amenities (and, it is hoped, revenue), and improved bus and short-term parking in Birdwood Avenue will also make it more convenient for people to visit. There's no room for more details here; please come and discover for yourselves what has been achieved with government funding and corporate sponsorship of \$7.5 million.

Preview tours of Observatory Gate and 'The Night Sky' organised by the Friends were a huge success. We will repeat the former on 23 March; the R.B.G. will introduce tours of astronomical interest within a month or so.

The Friends are now part of this 10ha expansion of the R.B.G. site; we now occupy Gate Lodge, which was the late-19th century caretaker's cottage for the observatory. It is in a prominent position immediately opposite the Shrine of Remembrance — so prominent that we have become the first port of call for tourists and delivery men. Anticipating this, our Executive Officer Margaret Howes has recruited rostered volunteers to divert these enquirers and to handle telephone calls. The Friends have given more than \$85,000 for the refurbishment of Gate Lodge and look forward to welcoming Association members to our new home.

Other recent grants to the R.B.G. have been:

- \$4000 (approx.) for the installation of track lighting and \$6200 for blackout curtains for Mueller Hall
- \$2000 for the purchase of three artworks from the Botanical Illustrators for the State Botanical Collection
- \$1680 for arboricultural staff to attend seminars by an overseas expert
- \$15,536 for training, marketing, etc. related to the development of an Aboriginal Heritage Walk
- \$10,000 towards the documentation and databasing of papers, notebooks and photographs for the Dr Jim Willis archive.

Two publishing projects are noteworthy; in November *Regardfully Yours*, volume 1 of the Mueller Correspondence (1840–59), of 842 pages, was launched, and librarian Helen Cohn has begun research on the National Herbarium for a book to mark its sesqui-centenary in 2003.

At our November annual meeting Honorary Life Membership was bestowed upon Council members Louise Coronel (convener of the Botanical Illustrators) and Heather Ironmonger (editor), and Robyn Tymms, a valuable member of the Activities sub-committee and our 'flower lady'.

We are convening a meeting shortly to encourage our younger members to organise activities of special interest to their age group.

The Gardens lost a part of their history in February with the removal of one of four English elms reputedly planted by the first curator, John Arthur, in 1846. A second of 'Arthur's elms' on the Tennyson lawn, also seriously decayed and shedding limbs, is roped off and will be removed next summer. The

Gardens face a challenge in coming years to gain public acceptance of the inevitable loss of much-loved but over-mature trees.

A new bronze sculpture representing the vigour of Nature commemorates the landscape legacy of Gardens Director William Guilfoyle. Commissioned from Michael Meszaros by an anonymous donor, it stands where the new link path from Observatory Gate approaches Oak Lawn.

The Growing Friends autumn sale will take place on 20 and 21 March around the Dahlia Bed. Entrance from Birdwood Avenue is through E Gate.

The Botanical Illustrators are still basking in the glory of their exhibition last October and November. Once again, the standard of the work surpassed that of the previous show, and the admiration for this special art form has required Dianne Emery to schedule an extra class. More than 3600 attended the exhibition and 112 paintings, valued at \$69,000, were sold. Artists from Queensland, New South Wales, South Australia and Tasmania joined local Friends in submitting entries.

A Mt Macedon tour in November and another to the Bellarine Peninsula in January were so popular that we filled a second bus each time. Autumn activities include day trips to the Mornington Peninsula and the Dandenongs, a visit to the Glenburn property of naturalist Alan Reid and a workshop on tree care by the Manager of Arboriculture at the R.B.G., Dean Simonsen.

Heather Ironmonger

Friends of Hamilton Botanic Gardens

WITH THE ARRIVAL OF SPRING and summer more people are moving through the Gardens and enjoying them. Regularly each month walk/talk programs and pleasant Sunday afternoon music have been organised by the Friends. They are well received by the public who support such ventures.

It is interesting to note that school children make regular use of the beautiful surroundings, particularly in the summer months. Some classes and their teachers cross the road from school to enjoy lessons under the canopy of huge shade trees.

All details have been finalised so that the plaque to commemorate the historic connections that Ferguson, von Mueller and Guilfoyle had

with the Hamilton Gardens is now with the manufacturer. In due time the plaque will be displayed on or near the Cottage for everyone to see and appreciate.

In November the Friends were delighted to host a dinner at which John Hawker, Heritage Victoria horticulturist, was the speaker. Mr Hawker also conducted a walk and talk in the Gardens, which was well attended and most interesting.

Friends have been pleased to receive the donation of a wall hanging made by some members of the Quilters group. It depicts the Cottage and features abutilon flowers and leaves, and hangs proudly in the Cottage.

Members look forward to renewing former friendships and meeting new and interesting people at the Association Conference in Warrnambool in April.

Beris Smith

Friends of the Ballarat Botanical Gardens

THE BALLARAT FRIENDS have had a busy start to 1999. The Begonia Festival, from 26 February to 9 March, is the biggest fund-raising event for the year. The Growing Friends have been open for business at the back of the Robert Clark Centre for the ten days of the Festival, and many of our members volunteered to lend a hand.

The Guides are also busy at this time, and enjoying the task of showing visitors our beautiful Gardens. Our fund-raising for the year will continue to focus on the completion of the 'back walk', and also more signs for our Gardens. The Australian Garden History Society is having a weekend in Ballarat on 27 and 28 March. The Friends are entertaining the visitors on the Saturday evening with a guided tour of the Gardens and a barbecue meal.

The Guides will be available during the Victorian Heritage Festival, from 14 to 23 April, with 'Autumn Treasures in the Gardens' tours.

During March we are looking forward to a visit to the Geelong Botanic Gardens and the Barrabool Hills Maze and Gardens. Our Annual General Meeting is in May and we are hoping to have some new blood on our Committee to take us into the year 2000.

Joan Garner

Friends of the Australian Inland Botanic Gardens

THE FRIENDS ARE LOOKING FORWARD to the end of a long and hot dry summer. The Gardens have survived well because of the excellent irrigation system and the marvellous mulch of discarded stalks of the crushed grapes from the neighbouring two wineries.

The Gardens were closed on some of the scheduled Open Days because of the heat and the fear of fires, as there had been two fires in the mulch from discarded cigarettes. So it is No Smoking Allowed in the Gardens now!

The Nature Trail is developing slowly and in the spring it was exciting to see new flowerings for the first time. The Open Day in October was well attended in the morning with an ecumenical service in the Bush Chapel, tours of the Gardens by tractor-train and a barbecue lunch. Basic construction of the ornamental lake and streams has been completed and plantings will begin when the stream starts to flow.

The Friends decorated a tree in the Alfred Deakin Tourist Centre for the Christmas tree display. Eighty-three local businesses took part and raised \$2500 for the Salvation Army.

The AIBG three apprentices have started work and are a great help to the rose 'deadheaders' on Wednesday mornings. The first apprentice, Jo Chilton, has finished her apprenticeship and has left to be married.

The American-style gazebo funded by the Friends has been completed in the American flora section of the Gardens. Next to be built is an African one — mud brick, thatched roof and exposed beams.

Fourteen Friends expect to make the trip to Warrnambool in April for the 1999 Conference of the Association.

Christine Yates

Friends of Gisborne Botanic Gardens

WE ARE ON WATER RESTRICTIONS here, which has not helped our Gardens over the summer. Our Maori carving Tanemahuta is standing guard over a browned-off expanse of grass but most of the plants are struggling on.

The Friends continue to propagate plants for the Gardens and a working bee in October saw many of them put in during a morning's work. Our Open Gardens day in November was most successful, although we now have all

the left-over plants to sell next month. If you happen to be in Gisborne on 20 or 21 March we will be at Joan Bourke and Friends Art and Craft Sale at 'Kumbari' on the Kilmore road.

Our big news is that, together with Gisborne Rotary, we succeeded in obtaining a substantial grant from the State Government and the Shire, so that we will be able to build the bridge over Jacksons Creek on the eastern side of the Gardens as set out in the Masterplan. Construction should begin soon!

Melanie Kinsey

Friends of Geelong Botanic Gardens

THE FRIENDS ARE WAITING to hear official confirmation of a proposal by Council in November last for the City of Greater Geelong to appoint a Director of Parks and Gardens, whose first priority will be the Botanic Gardens and Eastern Park. This will include a review and recommendation to Council on the management, operation, future funding, maintenance, capital expenditure and Master Plan for the Gardens and surrounding parkland. Money allotted for work on stage 1 of the Master Plan in the previous year's budget has been 'quarantined' until further notice.

The Friends welcomed the suggestion to appoint a Director of Parks and Gardens to oversee the Botanic Gardens but have been dismayed at the quarantining of funds, some of which were to go towards promotion of the Gardens which for the past few years has been funded solely by the Friends. We also are concerned that though it is now March there is still no announcement that the recommendation of Council will be adopted and implemented.

The Friends attend to all visitor services within the Gardens and have been extremely busy with booked guided walks over the summer months. We were delighted to guide a group of sixty-six from the Melbourne University Summer School of Gardening around our Gardens during February.

Local Probus Clubs have taken walks and refreshments at the Teahouse over summer. School visits have tested the knowledge and ingenuity of the Guides and Friends with a group of 130 before Christmas and more bookings for year 11 biology students in the pipeline. A new guide training course began in January and we have seven eager trainees, including a botanist, so there is much sharing

of knowledge. The experienced guides oversee the training program, which is demanding, to say the least. The education program for early primary students to be offered to schools is still to be finalised.

The cataloguing of the Gardens' reference library onto computer, which has been organised and partly funded by the Friends, is nearly complete. We would like to keep the librarian to oversee the library on a part-time basis as we envisage growth in the use of this asset.

The perennial border which is planted and maintained by the Friends in consultation with Gardens staff looks wonderful at this time of the year. The Historic Rose display, planted in 1997, has now filled out and has been given added character by the addition of six large welded iron pillars for the climbing roses.

On Sunday 14 March the Friends will host a BYO brunch with jazz by the Hot Club Swing group on the southern lawn of the Gardens. We would love to see Friends from some of the other Gardens.

The Friends will participate in Heritage Week in April; guided walks with a heritage theme will be offered.

Our Annual General Meeting is to be held on 21 April, just after the Association Conference.

Jayne Salmon

Friends of Albury Botanic Gardens

GREETINGS FROM THE HOT AND DRY north-east Victoria and the southern Riverina.

Watering systems have been all the go here since about October 1998, with not much more than a cupful of rain since then and nothing much more offered in the near future. The extended dry through the summer of 1998-99 is having a very drastic effect on quite a few of our specimen trees throughout the district's home gardens.

One victim of the extended dry weather and high temperatures was Albury Botanic Gardens' specimen 'Gallipoli Pine'. It fell during one night, fortunately causing no damage or injury. A good point is that our Albury-Wodonga woodturners have recovered the timber and are now kiln-drying the sawn slabs, which is progressing very successfully, without a split or a crack. It is intended that a table will be built

and presented to the local R.S.L. branch, and to 'turn' some souvenir giftware, which we hope will be available for sale at the 2000 Conference.

The Friends turned two years old on 12 January. We have a current membership of fifty and a very healthy bank balance, thanks to our growing group's efforts and the results of three plant sales. The next is scheduled for 11 April.

Garden tours are proving very popular on the occasions of the plant sales, keeping three or all four of our trained guides busy. Many school groups and busloads of visitors avail themselves of the a guided tour of our 121-year-old Gardens every week, so proving the value of our guide training course.

After almost two years the Gardens Conservation and Management Plan is on public display at the Albury Council offices, so we are keenly looking forward to taking part in the future development and direction of the Gardens.

The Australian Network for Plant Conservation (A.N.P.C. Inc.) will be holding its biennial conference at Lake Hume Resort from 26 to 29 November and the Albury Friends will be helping with man/woman-power where needed. It will be a great opportunity to witness the remarkable record of advancement in plant conservation from Australia and overseas.

The Gardens library has been extended with our own video and those of the Geelong Botanic Gardens and National Parks, and slide presentations. We are keen to go even further with our videos, slides and publications, and would be glad to come to an arrangement with any other Friends group that has any of these that could be made available.

We are most grateful to local Camellia specialists Tom and Olive Savige, who have donated a huge selection of cuttings, almost all locally-bred varieties, from their own collection. The cuttings are progressing very well and the garden bed is almost finished. This will certainly develop into a marvellous display and will be a real asset to the Gardens.

Our 1998-99 project, the new rose beds and arbour, which will follow the original curator's plans, is also progressing well and will add further beauty and colour to the Gardens by next summer.

At least eight of our members expect to join those attending the Warrnambool Conference after a 7-hour cross-country journey. But we are sure it will be worth it to be with so many others with like interests. See you there!

Jeff Gates

**Association of Friends of Botanic
Gardens (Victoria) Inc. A0026805Z**

President: Marie Ziebell

Secretary: Lawrence Cohn

Treasurer: David Baumgartner

Immediate Past President: Yvonne Mills

Committee: Eve Brunner, Joan Garner,
Melanie Kinsey, Jayne Salmon

Members of the Association

Central Goldfields Shire (Maryborough Botanic Gardens)

Corangamite Shire (Camperdown Botanic Gardens)

Friends of the Albury Botanic Gardens

Friends of the Australian Inland Botanic Gardens

Friends of Ballarat Botanical Gardens Inc.

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