



Campsis radicans (Trumpet Flower)
del. Beverley Graham 1994

Campsis

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

Welcome to 1995, and may it be a good year for 'Friends' and for Botanic Gardens.

As we foreshadowed in *Campsis* No. 3, we have written to other interstate Friends groups to ascertain whether there is any interest in the formation of a national Association. They have been asked to respond by the end of March, and I hope that I will be able to let you know the result when we meet in Benalla at the end of April.

The Association committee has been very helpful to the Benalla Friends in regard to the preparations for the conference to be held in Benalla on 29 and 30 April, and I thank them for their help and encouragement. We have a programme which I believe will be of interest to all. By now, you should have received details of the program and the attached registration form. If not, please let me know as soon as possible so that I can send this information to you. Your early registration will help us to complete the detailed arrangements.

Occasionally I hear about the formation of new groups of Friends of botanic gardens. In each case I have warmly invited them to become Members of the Association. I hope you will do likewise, both with new groups and with established groups that are not yet Members. There is always a benefit from 'strength in numbers', and we are still not a large Association.

Brian Chandler

Friends of Kings Park, Perth

The Kings Park Board was formed in 1895, with the Premier, John Forrest, as the first President. To celebrate this event, progress is being made on the Centennial Enhancement Project. The Framework Plan for the management of the Botanic Gardens and the public gardens into the 21st century is expected to be ready by June. It will parallel the Bushland Management Plan published earlier this year.

Much of the information needed to form the basis of the Plan has been collected. A series of five workshops was held during November and representatives of the Friends and of the Kings Park Guides were able to attend.

As part of the centenary celebrations Kings Park will host the Fourth International Botanic Gardens Conservation Congress. The theme, 'Reaching out - Botanic Gardens and conservation into the 21st century', reflects the changed rôle of Botanic Gardens throughout the years. In the last ten years the part to be played by botanic gardens as a link in the maintenance of biodiversity and the education of the public about this rôle have become paramount. The first Conservation Congress was held in Spain in 1985. Since that meeting, many new plant conservation techniques have been pioneered in botanic gardens, and more institutions developed to maintain living collections.

Friends of Galaringi, the Carlingford Botanic Parkland

Probably not known to many Victorians, Galaringi recently came to the notice of the Association's Secretary. It is a 14-hectare site under the Mobbs Hill lookout, near Pennant Hills Road in Carlingford, a north-west suburb of Sydney. It is still being developed, and is to represent the flora of the local Wainamatta Shales, based on the site's remnant bushland. The Parkland is administered by the Parramatta City Council, which has obtained a master plan.

The Friends of Galaringi was inaugurated in October 1984 and was incorporated in August 1990. It is playing an important part in measures to preserve and enhance the area of the Parkland. Information about the Parkland and the Friends may be had from the Hon. Secretary, 74 Honiton Avenue, Carlingford, NSW 2118.

Friends of the Cranbourne Botanic Gardens

The Cranbourne Botanic Gardens were recently officially named the Royal Botanic Gardens, Cranbourne. They remain under the control of the Royal Botanic Gardens Board as an annexe of the Royal Botanic Gardens, Melbourne. There is a new logo and an improved brochure.

A master plan for the development of the Gardens was launched on 23 February by the Hon. Mark Birrell, Minister for Conservation and Environment. This development plan establishes a new concept for botanic gardens by combining natural bushland, designed gardens, recreational spaces and a centre for scientific study and learning. The plan creates four features:

- The Australian Garden - combining horticulture, the arts, science and contemporary culture in a grand celebration of Australia's flora.

- The Botanic Collection - exhibiting the diversity of Australia's Flora.
- The Conservation Zone - offering a true bushland experience.
- The Woodland Recreation Zone - a unique recreational area.

The plan will be implemented over the next 20 or more years, but meanwhile the Gardens are worth visiting regularly to see the present Conservation Zone and to watch the continuing developments. The initial planting of 25,000 plants in the Australian Garden and associated design works will take place during this year.

Neil Laird

Friends of St Arnaud Queen Mary Botanic Gardens

The St Arnaud Friends was formed in September last year when Cr Ella Ebery of the Town of St Arnaud organised a public meeting to gauge public interest. The Town of St Arnaud, which has been a member of the Association, was facing extinction in the restructure of local government. The Friends was formed at the meeting, with Bryan Small as President and Michael Noonan as Secretary.

It is a crucial time for the Queen Mary Gardens, as the Council has been in process of restoring them to their original botanic status. The Friends hope to help in this process. There is concern that, under 'compulsory competitive tendering' systems and cost-cutting, the Gardens could be seen as just one of the many parks in the town, and be treated as such.

The Town Council has advertised for a heritage consultant to prepare a detailed plan on plantings of trees and garden beds, including the replacement of the palm collection for which the Gardens were once noted. Funds had been allocated for the plan and for advanced trees. The new Northern Grampians Shire has since approved the employment of the consultant but reserved a decision about the trees.

The Queen Mary Gardens were designed and planted in 1884. It is thought that William Guilfoyle was responsible for the layout. They are in the centre of the town and were once rich with rare botanical species. The teamsters' dam in the middle of the space was retained as a small lake. Unfortunately, buildings have encroached over the years, including an early church and a bowling green, but the remaining space is true to the original design.

Over the years the Gardens have been gradually reduced to park status by failure to replace the original species. The enclosing hedge has been removed and the tree canopy has been seriously depleted. The Royal Botanic Gardens, as part of its 1996 celebrations, has offered to supply some palms. There is one survivor of the original collection, a soaring specimen that is a landmark for those approaching the town. It will appear in the Friends' logo.

Ella Ebery

Friends of the Castlemaine Botanical Gardens

The Friends was formed on October 1992, and now has about ninety members. The main aims of the group are to actively assist in the conservation of the Gardens, and to encourage public support and appreciation of its history and its scientific functions.

The Gardens were established in 1860, and so are one of the earliest of Victoria's provincial botanic gardens. Work began soon after, transforming this 28-hectare gold-mining site into a splendid botanical garden. It reached its peak at the turn of the century and boasted such attractions as two man-made lakes with islands, a large ornamental fountain, wrought-iron entrance gates, a lattice summerhouse, three bridges over the creek, a bowling green, a grotto and a band rotunda.

Some of the notable trees still growing are the Royal Oak (*Quercus robur*), believed to be the second largest in Victoria, the

Jersey Elm (*Ulmus x minor Sarniensis*), the Soledad Pine (*Pinus torreyana*), the Woollybutt Gum (*Eucalyptus longifolia*), the Digger Pine (*Pinus sabiniana*), the Large-leaved Lime (*Tilia platyphyllos*), a group of Weeping Elms (*Ulmus glabra Camperdownii*), and an Indian Bean Tree (*Catalpa bignonioides*), believed to be the largest example in Victoria.

Since its formation the Friends has been working on many projects, including:

- The Summerhouse Reconstruction, which it is hoped will be completed in time for the Central Goldfields Gardens Festival in November this year.
- The Lombardy Poplar Wall Re-establishment. Once a significant feature of the Gardens, planting of over 100 cuttings from the few remaining original trees has begun and will continue for several months.
- Tree Labelling. More than 100 labels have been put in place, with priority for those of special significance, such as specimens registered by the National Trust.
- Junior Friends. A Junior Friends group has been established to educate primary-age children, and involve them in Gardens activities.

Recently it was announced that the Band Rotunda, which once graced the open lawn at the north of Lake Joanna, is to be rebuilt to the original 1898 plan, with money generously donated by the Castlemaine Rotary Club. Work is to commence shortly. The Rotunda will be not only a great asset to the Gardens, but also a reminder of the Gardens' history.

The Mt Alexander Shire Council is now responsible for the upkeep of the Gardens, making use of the Conservation Analysis and Management Plan adopted by the former Castlemaine City Council in 1991.

Lauretta Zilles

Friends of Benalla Botanical Gardens

The past fifteen months have not been kind to the Benalla Gardens. After the great flood and a serious drought, a severe storm caused much damage in the Gardens, involving the loss of the large Moreton Bay Fig and the Himalayan Spruce. The Council staff are to be commended for their work in cleaning up after the storm.

In December the Gardens were listed in a newspaper advertisement giving notice of intention to enter places in the Register of the National Estate, an intention heartily supported by the Friends.

A proposal for a kiosk in the Gardens is being considered by the Commissioners of the new Delatite Shire. The proposal is not new, and has been considered by the Friends' committee for some time. The committee is particularly concerned that the kiosk should not detract from the Gardens, and was invited recently to make its views known to the Commissioners.

The rotunda in the Gardens, which features in the Friends' logo, was built in 1911. Today it needs to be restored, and the Friends have acknowledged a generous anonymous donation for the purpose. The subject is being taken up with the Shire Commissioners.

The committee has been working hard to make the April conference of the Association one that will attract many participants and will be remembered by them as a highlight of 1995. It looks forward to seeing you there.

Brian Chandler

Friends of Geelong Botanic Gardens

The Friends began 1995 on a high note with much publicity in the local press to announce the exhibition of watercolours of rare and endangered Australian plant species by Helen Leitch. The exhibition, called 'It's a Rare Thing', was hosted by the Friends, and was held in the Geelong

Art Gallery until 12 March. Its opening by John Arnott, horticultural technician at the Melbourne Zoo, was attended by 180 Friends and their guests. The Friends are delighted to be working with the Art Gallery, and many visitors have enjoyed the voluntary guides' walks around the Gardens, focusing on plants illustrated in the exhibition. Schools have been particularly interested.

The Conservation Analysis and Management Study of the Gardens and Eastern Park, being conducted by Chris Dance Landscape Design, is proceeding well, and a public workshop was held on 15 February. A draft report is to be issued at the end of April.

The Friends' Tea House was very busy during the summer, and was opened at night to cater for those attending a performance in the Gardens of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, before its season in Melbourne.

The perennial border has been much admired during the summer, to the pleasure of the Friends' Growing Friends group, which plants and maintains it.

Jayne Salmon

Friends of the Ballarat Botanical Gardens

The annual Begonia Festival was held in the Gardens from 3 to 13 March. GardenFest, part of the Festival, was held also on the foreshore of Lake Wendouree. The focal point of the GardenFest was the huge floral carpet, this year with a Fairyland theme. The Growing Friends' autumn plant sale took place on the two weekends of the Festival.

The highlight of the Festival was the opening of the new Robert Clark Horticultural Centre. The new conservatory, designed by architect Peter Elliott, is an exciting contemporary walk-through structure that will display the famed Begonias to perfection.

His Excellency Mr Richard McGarvie, Governor of Victoria, opened the Centre on 9 March.

The second part of the complex, the Community Resource Centre, is due to be completed by the end of March, and will become the new home of the Friends and of many horticultural organisations.

The Friends' first spring plant sale, held at the Gardens' nursery during the Melbourne Cup week-end in November, was most successful. In conjunction with the sale an Open Gardens day was organised, seven gardens being open for inspection by Friends.

Joan Garner

public to be held. The work is proceeding slowly as funds become available and the public is now able to watch its development.

Members of Friends groups who attend the Association's 1996 conference will have the opportunity to study the Park, as the conference is to be held in Berwick, at the invitation of the Friends of Wilson Botanic Park.

Albury Botanic Gardens

Greetings from sunny Albury! There have been 130mm of rain in five weeks, temperatures ranging from 12° to 42° and winds from 0-100 km/h, a real smorgasbord of weather. Still, the rain and the cooler spells of weather have been gratefully received by all, especially the farmers and gardeners of the Albury area.

Work has begun on our new native section, on the west side of Bungambrawartha Creek, with pruning, spraying and site preparation almost complete. It is hoped that we will soon start on the gravel paths, mulching, the placement of large rocks and a retaining wall of 90-year-old bridge timbers from the Albury railway station. The drip system will be installed after planting in the autumn. Plantings are to include

Friends of the Royal Botanic Gardens, Melbourne

The exhibition by the Botanical Illustrators group of the Friends, held in October in the Herbarium Hall, attracted 4,000 visitors; two-thirds of the works on display were sold and the overall profit of \$11,500 confirmed the event as an artistic and financial success. As usual, it depended on a great effort and contribution of time from enthusiastic volunteers. In anticipation of the 1996 exhibition, the February meeting of the Botanical Illustrators' group highlighted selection criteria for exhibiting botanical art. An overflow audience participated in a vigorous discussion with the three speakers.

Melbourne's exceptionally warm, dry summer was kind to the ever-growing number of commercial theatrical, musical and film presentations in the Gardens. The former Director's Residence, Gardens House, now fully restored, is proving popular for private functions, and is earning income for the Gardens.

Unfortunately, for lack of sponsorship funding, a major festival planned for 5 March by the Gardens staff in conjunction with Rotary had to be cancelled. The Friends had been looking forward to a boost in membership from this event. A Family Day held by the Friends in November was also not the success that was hoped for. Despite an excellent programme of activities, it failed to attract large numbers, and it has had to be regarded as a learning experience.

At the annual general meeting in November the outstanding contribution of Foundation Friend **Golda Isaac** was marked by her election as an Honorary Life Member.

Recent donations by the Friends to the Gardens have included \$16,000 for special pine panelling in the restored Rose Pavilion and \$8,880 for new seats in the refurbished Herbarium Hall. The monumental Vol. 2 of the RBG's *Flora of Victoria* (946 pages) was published in December, assisted by a grant of \$10,000

shrubberies displaying a rich variety of plants, and focal points composed of plants of dramatic form and colour. By the end of the century a transformation had taken place. The lake was completed in 1885. In Guilfoyle's plan one island was to be clothed in tropical foliage and the other in willows.

Charles Scoborio retired in 1906, after 40 years as curator, and died in 1912; he was succeeded by William Donald.

The years after Federation were a progressive time for the Gardens with additional attractions being added.

- A fernery was built in the early 1900s and was rebuilt to the original design in 1985.
- Three very fine urns, a drawing of which is the Friends' emblem, grace the Gardens. There is also a sundial, recently restored.
- The fountain, which was once reduced to a flower bed, was restored by the Friends in 1991.
- The Rotunda, completed in 1913, is typical of Australian garden buildings of the period. On summer afternoons, tea was served from the lower section while the members of the Warrnambool Town Band and the Warrnambool Temperance Band entertained visitors from the bandstand above.

There are several important trees, some of which are:

- Monterey Pines (*Pinus radiata*) which form a windbreak around the Gardens, and are believed to be the original plants sent by Baron von Mueller.
- A 'Lone Pine' (*Pinus brutia*), of especial significance, is one of a very few known to have been germinated in 1928 from seed brought from Gallipoli by Sgt Keith McDowell. The first tree was planted at the Melbourne Shrine in 1932 and the specimen at Warrnambool in 1934.
- Two specimens of Manna Gum (*Eucalyptus pryoriana*), which predate the creation of the Gardens.
- An important collection of different species of bamboo.

- Norfolk Island Pines (*Araucaria heterophylla*), originally imported from Norfolk island, and used as the emblem of the City of Warrnambool.

In recognition of the Garden's significance it was registered by the National Trust of Australia in 1990 and was added to the Register of the National Estate in 1992.

Marie Johnstone

Association of Friends of Botanic Gardens (Victoria) Inc.

Incorporated under the *Associations Incorporation Act 1981* of Victoria No. A0026805Z

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