

*Campsis radicans* (Trumpet Flower)  
del. Beverley Graham 1994

# Campsis

Newsletter of the  
Association of Friends of Botanic Gardens (Victoria)  
ISSN 1320-8578

## From the President

**W**HAT a most unusual summer we have been experiencing this year. I hope it has been as kind to your Garden as it has been to ours at Berwick.

Your Committee has met again since the last edition of *Campsis*, this time at the Royal Botanic Gardens, Melbourne, where we appreciated the hospitality of the Friends.

It would be remiss of me if I did not, on your behalf, congratulate the Royal Botanic Gardens, Melbourne, the Director, the staff and the Friends on their achievements over the past 150 years. The standards they have set in that time have established a series of benchmarks for us all to attain over the years to come.

You should all have received your copy of the Registration Form for our 6th Annual Conference, to be held at the Narre Warren Office of the City of Casey on 27 and 28 April. We have an excellent program arranged for you, based on the theme 'The Evolving of Botanic Gardens', and there are several speakers who all have an interesting story to tell about developing and redeveloping botanic gardens.

Please take this as a personal invitation to attend. If you have other members wishing to attend just photocopy the Registration Form you have for them.

If you are interested in temperature patterns I am sure you will want to hear Dr Roger Francey's paper on 'A 3000-year temperature record from Tasmanian Huon Pine'. Dr Francey is from the CSIRO and a member of the Friends of Wilson Botanic Park.

We have a hard-working Conference Committee doing everything possible for your pleasure – so be there!

**Max Pawsey**

## Friends of Wilson Botanic Park

**O**UR development work is still continuing at Wilson Botanic Park, Berwick, as it will for many years to come. It is important that permanent works are carried out at a high standard as they will be required to stand for hundreds of years.

The major involvement of the Friends over the last twelve months has been in general maintenance; as well, the Friends have been staffing the office for admissions and enquiries when the Park is open to the public. The most significant factors affecting this have been the unusual summer conditions, which have maintained weed growth, and the time involved by our committee preparing for the forthcoming Conference.

Our Rose Garden has been started near the internal entrance area and will be well advanced by the time of the Conference. Plans have also been approved for the Honour Wall and pools, near the internal entrance gates; the boulder hop alterations; the Board Walk at the back lake; and the newly donated Rotunda. All of these should be under construction by the end of April.

During the last twelve months we have begun Bird Walks on a regular basis under the direct supervision of Mr Ken Simpson, the noted ornithologist and author of bird books. Ken has been doing a marvellous job in introducing us to our fine feathered friends, those who only visit the Park as well as those in permanent residence.

Because of the birds' seasonal migration habits the walks have been taking place on a 3-month cycle. After coffee about 60 people have accompanied Ken at 6 o'clock on each Sunday morning, breakfasting about nine on a sausage sizzle – a great way to start Sunday before church!

A register has been set up of all bird sightings in the Park and detailed survey sheets are filled in by several of the keen members. The Board Walk and the Bird Hide about to be constructed will be of great use to this interest group

**Max Pawsey**

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

**T**HE Royal Botanic Gardens, Cranbourne recently acquired an additional 11 hectares of land along the southern boundary of the existing property. The land was formerly used for pastoral grazing. The purchase was funded by private donations to the Maud Gibson Trust, a body dedicated to advancing the appreciation of native Australian plant life.

This important extension will provide soils and growing conditions vital for the successful development of the Gardens, which will see the existing grasslands planted with displays of Australian plants grouped into ecological habitat collections. The new parcel of land abuts the Wylies Creek Lakes, which have been constructed as the first stage of the overall Development Plan launched last year. It will form part of the precinct to become the Botanic Collections area, and will be an important contribution to the scientific and horticultural role of the Royal Botanic Gardens, Cranbourne.

An on-site ceremony was held on 14 March at which Mr Peter Howson, Chairman of the Maud Gibson Trust, presented the land to the Government of Victoria, represented by the Hon. Rob Maclellan, Minister for Planning.

The Maud Gibson Trust was established in 1945 and has been central to the development of the Cranbourne Gardens. Trust members worked from the early 1950s to find an appropriate parcel of land for the establishment of a native plant garden, and purchased the original 174-hectare site at Cranbourne for the State Government in 1970.

**Jill Burness**

### **Friends of the Ballarat Botanic Gardens**

**T**HE Masterplan presented by John Patrick Pty Ltd was adopted by the City of Ballarat in December. The Masterplan and Management Strategy is a document that provides a flexible

management tool to protect the Botanical Gardens' past, while also providing a framework to guide its future.

The Christmas display in the Robert Clark Conservatory featured a large Christmas tree, complete with lights and decorations. The Friends manned the Conservatory for the eleven evenings before Christmas, thus giving the public the opportunity to see the tree with the lights on – a truly wonderful sight. We hope this will become an annual event for us; next time we will have carol singers and other attractions.

We were delighted to receive a grant through Victoria's Conservation Grants Program to boost funds already raised for the restoration of the Claxton Monument. Minister Mark Birrell travelled to Ballarat to present this grant. Work will begin on the monument within the next few weeks.

We recently welcomed Friends from both Geelong and Melbourne and proudly showed them the Conservatory.

It is Begonia Festival time in Ballarat. There is a magnificent display in the Conservatory and the mass planting of annuals in the Gardens adds wonderful colour and interest for our many visitors.

Our Growing Friends continue to work hard. We have plant sales from the Resource Centre every Tuesday afternoon and our three-day sale over the Australia Day week-end was most successful. Another sale is planned for the week-end after the Begonia Festival. Our Guides have also been busy and have gained good experience. We hope to attract some new recruits during the next few months.

The Friends' next visit is to Macedon, where Stephen Ryan of the Dicksonia Nursery will take us to his own garden and to two others in the area.

**Joan Garner**

### **Friends of Sunraysia Oasis Botanical Gardens**

**F**OR those who have not yet seen them, the Sunraysia Oasis Botanical Gardens are situated on the New South Wales side of the Murray River, about 8 km from Mildura. An exciting new project, unlike most botanical gardens, it is an incorporated body administered by a committee of management. It is funded by contributions from individuals, service clubs and

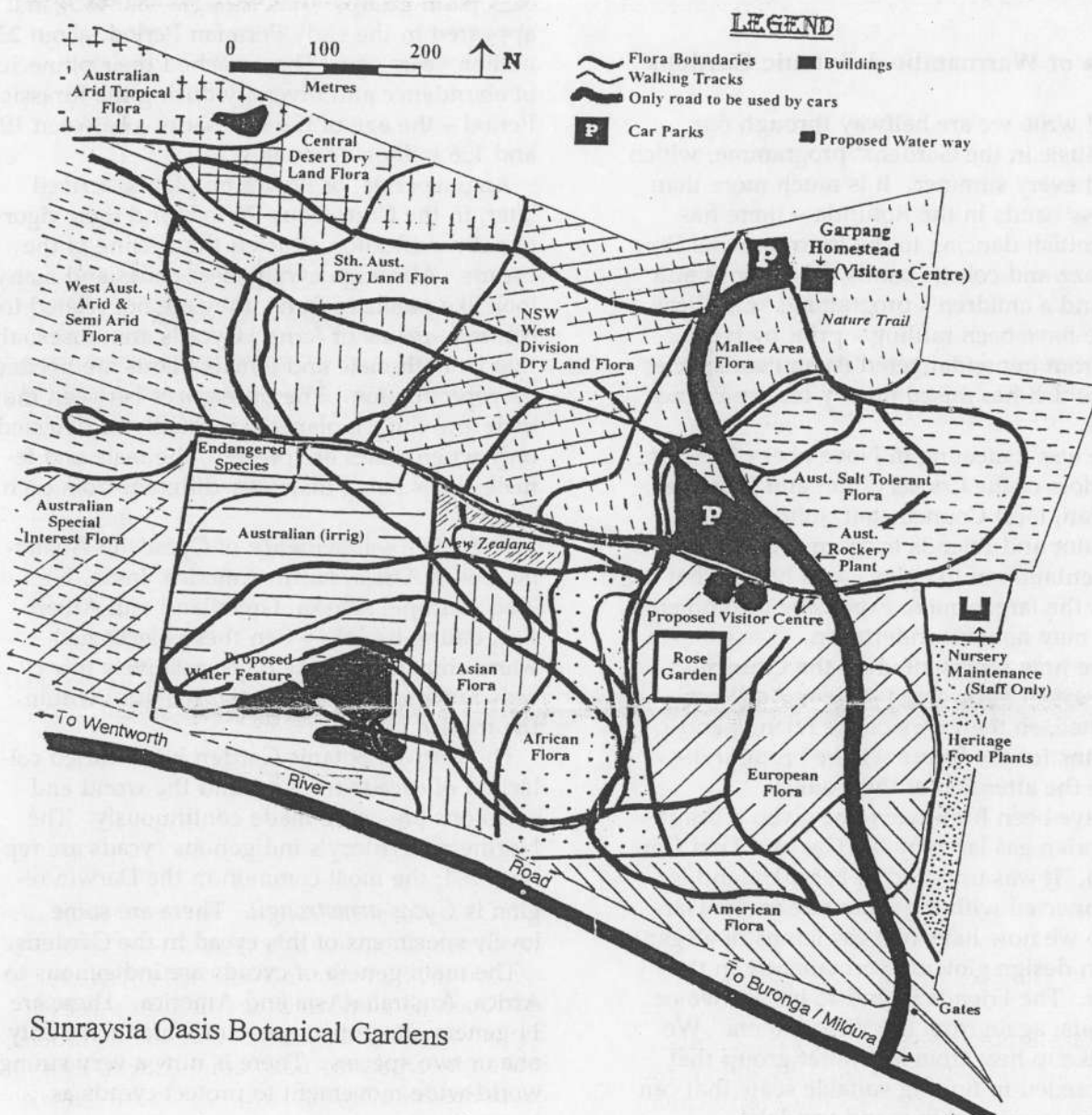
local government, by the donation or discounting of services and materials, or by direct financial help. The establishment of gardens of international standard will reflect this arid zone, the irrigation district's character, by displaying Australian and exotic species in divisions according to regions of origin.

In 1991 the Gardens' patron, Lady Stephen, and the former Governor-General Sir Ninian Stephen planted the first *Eucalyptus citriodora* trees which line the entrance drive. Since then the development has been steady. The total area of land available for development is 152.3 ha. Originally a grazing lease, it was relinquished by the lessees free of charge to the Gardens.

Initial development is planned for 49.5 ha, of which 26 ha will be Dryland Gardens and 23.5 ha will be Irrigated Gardens. The irrigation for this first stage is complete, and almost half of this area has already been planted. A dramatic and flourishing Rose Garden is a present focal point in the European division of the irrigated area.

With the co-operation of the local municipal council the proposed lake is being excavated (to provide fill for roadmaking nearby), and planting of this area has begun.

A large pine-log station homestead has been donated to the Gardens by a local grazing family. It was dismantled by members of a Mildura Rotary Club, transported to the Gardens and





re-erected for use as a temporary visitor centre. Eventually it will be used for an historical display of some of the district's heritage.

The Friends' organization was formed in 1989. Members have been involved in raising funds, holding social events, acting as tour guides, and taking part in working bees, maintenance and specific projects.

We have enjoyed visits from the Melbourne, Benalla and Ballarat Friends. We invite Friends from other areas to visit our Gardens and share our excitement in being involved in the development of a wonderful community project. I will be happy to give you further information from PO Box 1741, Mildura, 3501, phone 050 245923.

**Dorothy Hodges**

### **Friends of Warrnambool Botanic Gardens**

AS I write we are halfway through our 'Music in the Gardens' programme, which we hold every summer. It is much more than just brass bands in the Rotunda – there has been Scottish dancing to the Warrnambool Pipe Band, jazz and college bands, Irish songs and music and a children's programme. On these days we have been raffling a print by Helen Leitch from her endangered Australian species series, which has raised money for the Friends' activities.

There was a meeting in November of one of the authors of the Conservation and Management Plan, local Council staff, John Hawker, our curator and Friends to discuss the further implementation of the plan. It is hoped that some of the larger, more expensive recommendations may now be undertaken.

We are now represented on the Council's newly-formed Parks and Gardens Advisory Committee, so the views of the Friends and their plans for the future will be brought directly to the attention of the Council.

We have been fortunate to be given a beautiful Victorian gas lamp by the Gas and Fuel Corporation. It was unveiled in February and is now connected with the other one in the Gardens, so we now have two gas lamps of elegant Victorian design glowing permanently in the Gardens. The Friends intend to install two or three seats, again from the Victorian era. We would like to hear from any other group that has succeeded in finding suitable seats that can withstand rough weather and vandals!

The Royal Botanic Gardens, Melbourne, as part of its 150th anniversary celebrations, is giving us some 70 trees to add to our Gardens. They have been carefully chosen to enhance our conifer collection, and there are many other species which Guilfoyle and von Mueller would have specified a hundred years ago. These trees were to come early in April – a very exciting event for us.

**Marigold Curtis**

### **Friends of the Darwin Botanic Gardens**

(From the Friends' Newsletter, March 1996)

CYCADS are one of the oldest surviving plant groups. It is thought that they first appeared in the early Permian Period, about 230 million years ago. They reached their pinnacle of abundance and diversity during the Jurassic Period – the age of the dinosaurs – between 193 and 136 million years ago.

Angiosperms, or flowering plants, arrived later, in the Cretaceous Period, and their vigorous diversification assisted the decline of the cycads. Although cycads bear cones and many look like palms or ferns, they are not related to conifers, palms or ferns. Cycads are unisexual, that is, both male and female plants are needed for reproduction. The differences between the male and female plants can usually be detected only when cones are present, the male and female cones being distinctly different from each other.

There is fossil evidence of Cycads in Australia, South Africa, North America, India, England, Europe, Alaska, Greenland and Antarctica, dating back to when these places had warm climates. These days, relatively few cycads remain, and almost all are found within the tropics.

The Darwin Botanic Garden has a varied collection of cycads from around the world and additions are being made continuously. The Northern Territory's indigenous cycads are represented; the most common in the Darwin region is *Cycas armstrongii*. There are some lovely specimens of this cycad in the Gardens.

The main genera of cycads are indigenous to Africa, Australia/Asia and America. There are 11 genera altogether, some of which have only one or two species. There is now a very strong world-wide movement to protect cycads as

many are threatened or extinct in their native habitats.

### **Friends of Geelong Botanic Gardens**

**T**HE Friends celebrated their tenth anniversary with a twilight gathering in the Gardens on 27 November last. The weather was beautiful and over a hundred Friends attended. Thirteen Friends were given certificates to mark ten years of dedicated service. Jayne Salmon was awarded Life Membership of the group.

The Chris Dance Master Plan to guide the future development of the Gardens and Eastern Park was adopted by the City of Greater Geelong Council in November and we are now awaiting the announcement of the Advisory Committee, which will oversee the implementation of the Plan. The Friends will be represented by two members of the Committee.

Friends of the Geelong Botanic Gardens have joined other local Friends groups for two very successful gatherings this year. We joined the Friends of Geelong Art Gallery to bring Victorian Gallery Guide Dinah Whittaker to Geelong to present an illustrated lecture on Ellis Rowan, explorer, writer, botanical and wildlife artist, early in February. Later in the month we joined the Friends of the Chamber Orchestra of Geelong for an evening of live music with a variety of ensembles in the Gardens. Friends of both groups brought a picnic tea and were able to purchase refreshments from our Tea House. At the end of March we visited the Ballarat Botanic Gardens with their Friends and Friends of the Royal Botanic Gardens, Melbourne.

Our autumn plant sale was held on the weekend of 2 March, with a very pleasing result.

### **Jayne Salmon**

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

**A**BOUT 50,000 people celebrated the 150th birthday of the Gardens on Foundation Day, Sunday 25 February. That was followed on 21 March by Descendants Day and the first of five talks arranged by the Friends about the history of the Gardens. Thus the heritage aspect of the celebrations has been put firmly in place.

A contemporary feature, a sculpture walk in the Gardens, has provoked strong opinions –

both for and against; it will be on show until 26 May. But there's unlikely to be any doubt about the popularity of another artistic event. Annemeike Mein's interpretations of nature embroidered in textile are to be exhibited from 31 May to 14 July in the Mueller Hall at the National Herbarium.

Tattersalls have donated \$60,000 to the Gardens for a tapestry that will decorate the new Visitor Centre planned for the Observatory site. The Victorian Tapestry Workshop will interpret an Arthur Boyd painting of Shoalhaven River saplings for this outstanding artistic acquisition.

Future Friends' activities connected with the sesquicentenary include a Grand Ball at Government House on 28 June, an exhibition of Botanical Art from 10 October to 5 November, and a series of bus tours in the steps of Baron von Mueller, between September and December.

The Friends are making a special effort to recruit more members in 1996, and the number of financial members passed 1300 before the end of March. A new class of Life Members has been introduced.

The Friends' Shop beside the Ornamental Lake continues to do excellent business. Its profits owe much to the rostered Friends who staff it. An Honour Roll has been placed in the Shop, recognising 13 volunteers who have served for 10 years. The Shop has produced attractive greeting cards and postcards to mark this special year.

The Growing Friends' autumn sale on 23 and 24 March was the success we have come to expect, with about \$21,000 being raised. Buyers who spent more than \$100 were rewarded with the promise of a bonus plant at the spring sale. The Growing Friends have also introduced Gift Vouchers that may be used at their nursery.

A Friends' one-day trip to the Bellarine Peninsula in February attracted two busloads of garden viewers and berry pickers; autumn visits were also scheduled to the Ballarat Botanic Gardens and to gardens in the Dandenongs.

The Trustees of the Friends of the Royal Botanic Gardens, Melbourne Trust Fund have contributed \$25,000 from the Fund to the cost of a significant scientific collecting expedition in April. This will see six Melbourne Herbarium staff and two artists collaborate with the Northern Territory Herbarium to commemorate an expedition in the Victoria River region of northern Australia in 1855-56, led by A.C. Gregory. Ferdinand Mueller was the expedition's botanist.

### **Heather Ironmonger**

## Friends of Benalla Botanical Gardens

THE Benalla Friends went into their Christmas/New Year recess after their November meeting, and met again late in February. Consequently there is not a lot to tell just now.

A significant addition to our Gardens is presently being arranged by a Benalla committee; it will be a memorial to the late Sir Edward Dunlop, and will take the form of a one-and-a-half lifesize statue of Sir Edward ministering to two of his fellow prisoners of war. The sculptor engaged to do the work has almost completed the sculpture, and it will be unveiled in November this year. There will be only three memorials to Sir Edward in Australia, the others being one already unveiled in Melbourne and one in Sydney. Sir Edward was born in the Wangaratta Base Hospital, and was raised at Stewarton, north of Benalla. He attended the Benalla High School.

Many people familiar with the Benalla Gardens will recall the adjacent Council caravan park, which was closed several years ago. The park area was incorporated into our Master Plan for the Gardens, but no detailed planning of its redevelopment occurred until recently, when the Delatite Shire produced a concept plan for discussion. We have been looking forward to the beginning of this project for some time and are pleased now to see some action. The Shire expects to undertake work over two years, beginning this year.

On Sunday 12 November last, during the Benalla Rose Festival, there was an *official opening* of our refurbished Band Rotunda in the Gardens. We have been working towards this occasion for a long time and the Rotunda now looks resplendent with all the work completed. Those who attended the Association's 1995 Conference in Benalla no doubt saw the almost-completed refurbishment.

## Brian Chandler

## Albury Botanic Gardens

ALBURY has been having great weather with warm days, cool nights and some very timely falls of rain.

Plans are well under way for the establishment of a Friends group in Albury. We are grateful to all those who have helped with information and constitutions. That has been a great stepping-stone.

We have completed some urgent tree maintenance work, especially on the liquidambar, which have seeded heavily and dropped branches at a great rate, fortunately mainly at night. Sadly, one of our three Deodar Cedars of 85 years of age has succumbed to wet feet and will soon be removed. Our local wood-turners are waiting anxiously. We are still investigating the cause of the excess water.

Our new native section has been awaiting the arrival of the 100 plants from the Royal Botanic Gardens, Melbourne. Our thanks go to Trish Vanloon-Benson and her team.

We are hosting 'On the Brink on Tour' from mid-August to the start of September. The local schools and the Gardens staff are very keen to unpack it and set it up. We expect that everyone will have a great time, and that it will be very worthwhile for the school children and for conservation.

## Paul Scannell

## Friends of the Castlemaine Botanical Gardens

ONE of the most exciting things to happen last year in Castlemaine was the reconstruction of the Band Rotunda. This was paid for by the Castlemaine Rotary Club to celebrate 60 years of their organization in the district.

Unfortunately, last year several trees had to be removed from the Gardens, a decision not made lightly. However, the Friends sold the wood from the trees, raising a little money towards our running costs as well as seeing the wood put to useful purposes.

Earlier this year we held a luncheon with Robyn Annear as speaker. Robyn is a Castlemaine-based author and spoke about some of the characters in her book *Bearbrass: Imaging early Melbourne*. This was held in the old kiosk, now generally known to all as the Pipe Band Hall, and was a great success. Another successful evening was a film night. *Hotel Sorrento* was well attended and, with the special effort held in conjunction, raised a tidy sum for our various projects.

The Poplar Wall has now been completed. This was another long project, begun in 1993 with propagation from the few original trees left. This year we have planted over 50 trees, including replacements of trees damaged or removed by vandals.



A Twilight Wine and Cheese/Tour of the Gardens and a Champagne Breakfast/Tour were held in conjunction with the Garden Festival late last year. These were so popular that we will repeat them on 28 April with the Victorian Heritage Festival.

Early last year we applied for National Estate Grants funding to help the reconstruction of the 1872 Summerhouse, and to the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources Conservation Grants project to erect enamel signs with a map and list of significant trees. We did not succeed in attracting funds, but we are trying again.

On 10 April we will be delighted to receive the Royal Botanic Gardens 150th anniversary tree donation.

We continue actively to educate people about the history of the Gardens. In the past year a talk was given to the Castlemaine U3A and tours were given to the Castlemaine Permaculture and Landcarers group, as well as the Friends of the Sydney Botanic Gardens.

**Danielle Johnson**

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

*President:* Max Pawsey

*Vice-President:* John Harper

*Secretary:* Lawrence Cohn

*Treasurer:* David Baumgartner

*Immediate Past President:* Brian Chandler

*Committee:* Philip Ayton, Joan Garner, Ian Rogers, Jayne Salmon

#### *Members of the Association*

Albury City Council

Central Goldfields Shire (Maryborough Botanic Gardens)

Corangamite Shire (Camperdown Botanic Gardens)

Friends of Ballarat Botanical Gardens Inc.

Friends of Benalla Botanical Gardens Inc.

Friends of the Castlemaine Botanical Gardens Inc.

Friends of the Colac Botanic Gardens

Friends of the Royal Botanic Gardens, Cranbourne Inc.

Friends of Geelong Botanic Gardens Inc.

Friends of the Gisborne Botanic Gardens Inc.

Friends of Hamilton Botanic Gardens Inc.

Friends of the Royal Botanic Gardens, Melbourne Inc.

Friends of the Port Fairy Botanical Gardens

Friends of St Arnaud Queen Mary Botanic Gardens

Friends of Sunraysia Oasis Botanic Gardens

Friends of the Warrnambool Botanic Gardens

Friends of Wilson Botanic Park Inc.

Macedon Ranges Shire (Kyneton Botanic Gardens)

Address: C/- National Herbarium of Victoria,  
Birdwood Avenue, South Yarra, Vic. 3141

Telephone: 03 9848 7029, Fax: 030650 7723

