



Campsis

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

Campsis radicans (Trumpet Flower)
del. Beverley Graham 1994

From the President

SOON AFTER the issue of *Campsis* No.6 the Friends of Wilson Botanic Park hosted the very successful sixth annual conference of the Association at Narre Warren, under the chairmanship of Max Pawsey. Several excellent addresses, all provoking many questions, were combined with instructive guided visits to both Wilson Botanic Park at Berwick and the Royal Botanic Gardens Cranbourne. As usual, much valuable discussion took place as those attending the conference exchanged news and views. We were pleased to see nearly seventy members of Friends groups, especially the Friends of the National Botanic Gardens Canberra and the Friends of the Wombat Hill Gardens, Daylesford. The Friends of Wilson Botanic Park are to be congratulated on their choice of speakers and on the arrangements for the conference.

At the Association's annual meeting I was elected President for 1996-97, Max Pawsey then becoming Immediate Past President. His predecessor Brian Chandler then stepped down from the Committee, as did Philip Ayton and Ian Rogers. We thank them for their valued contributions to the work of the Committee. New members of the Committee are Eve Brunner (Melbourne) and Melanie Kinsey (Gisborne). Lyn Middleton (Mildura) later accepted appointment as Vice-President. We were glad to welcome them to the Committee. Lawrence Cohn and David Baumgartner were re-elected as Secretary and Treasurer, and Joan Garner and Jayne Salmon were re-elected as members of the Committee.

The seventh conference, hosted by the Melbourne Friends, will be held in the Mueller Hall of the National Herbarium on 19 and 20 April next year, and a preliminary notice is enclosed. I invite you to copy that notice and to distribute copies to your members.

We are now near the end of the year in which the Royal Botanic Gardens, Melbourne has been celebrating its 150th anniversary and I know that many of your Gardens have benefited from the *Flora for Victoria* project. This was a splendid way to remember how that outstanding botanist Ferdinand von Mueller, who died a hundred years ago, did so much to help in the establishment of many of the Gardens of which our members are Friends.

John Harper

Friends of Port Fairy Botanic Gardens

THE SHIRE OF MOYNE recently allocated \$14,000 for conservation, development and maintenance plans for the Port Fairy and Koroit Botanic Gardens. A steering committee was formed to develop a brief, and eventually a tender was let. At our next Friends of the Gardens meeting we will meet the successful tenderer to put forward our thoughts on future restoration and future maintenance of our depleted Gardens.

Plants donated from the *Flora for Victoria* project that have not been planted have all been potted and are doing really well. We are going to wait for the new development plan before establishing any further new beds that will give these plants a permanent home.

Our *Escallonia* collection has now grown to 27 species, not all planted out yet, but sufficiently established to be counted.

Five private gardens will be opened on 5 January 1997 for our main fundraising effort. This time most of the gardens are in the Rosebrook-Tower Hill area.

Margaret McOrist

Friends of Hamilton Botanic Gardens

IT IS ALMOST a year since the completion of the improvement to the artificial lake, the addition of the fountain and the rebuilding of the footbridge. Only now can we appreciate the added beauty and atmosphere this gives to our Gardens, as the area has settled and the newly-planted surrounding gardens are flourishing.

The present big project being undertaken involves the external restoration of the original Garden Cottage, which was built in 1882 as a home for the Curator. When this is completed the Friends' work will begin. Our project is to improve the interior so that the Cottage will become a focal point for visitors from near and far. The ultimate aim is to display some historical artifacts and photographs, to be a starting point for a guided tour of the Gardens, or to be a restful place to sit and enjoy the atmosphere. The Cottage will also be 'home' to the Friends for their meetings and other activities.

Friends were delighted to host a visit by the Australian Garden History Society, when James Guilfoyle planted a commemorative tree. We also enjoyed a visit by the Friends of the Royal Botanic Gardens Sydney as they travelled on an Edna Walling tour.

We are very proud to have the official Abutilon collection at the Hamilton Botanic Gardens; among the gift of trees and shrubs from the *Flora for Victoria* project were several abutilons to add to the collection.

Beris Smith

Friends of Gisborne Botanic Gardens

MOST OF THE THIRTY or so botanic gardens across Victoria were begun in the late 1800s. Since then very few regional botanic gardens have been created as times changed and people looked elsewhere for their recreational pursuits. However, botanic gardens are again increasing in popularity, as was indicated by a 1994 survey by the Australian Bureau of Statistics. That survey found that nearly 50% of Australians visit a botanic gardens each year. So it is with great pride and a lot of optimism for the future that the Macedon Ranges Shire and the Friends of Gisborne Botanic Gardens announce the formal opening of the Gisborne Botanic Gardens on Saturday 9 November 1996.

Work on the Gardens began in 1991, when

the former Shire of Gisborne had plans for the site drawn up by EDGe Environmental Design Group. The 4-hectare site was identified as a crucial part of the Jacksons Creek Valley and is situated in the heart of the growing township of Gisborne.

A New Zealand theme was chosen for the Gardens for a number of reasons.

1. It would create a link with our sister city of Gisborne in New Zealand.
2. It would become an educational facility.
3. The climate of Gisborne Victoria is similar to that in many parts of New Zealand.
4. It would be a unique development, as there is no other New Zealand botanic garden in Australia.
5. It could be linked to research.

Work on the Gardens has progressed since 1991; site works have been carried out by Shire staff, volunteers such as the Friends, and trainees in two Landcare and Environment Action (LEAP) programs. The Shire and the Friends now feel that the time is right for the Gardens to be officially opened. As 1996 sees the Royal Botanic Gardens, Melbourne celebrating its 150th birthday, it seemed fitting to have the opening this year and to ask the Director of the Gardens, Dr Philip Moors, to do the honours.

Our sister city of Gisborne in New Zealand commissioned a 4-metre tall carving of Tanemahuta (Lord of the Forest) to be erected in the Gardens, and dedicated at the opening. The Maori carver of Tanemahuta and two Kauri (Maori elders) are coming to supervise the ceremony, as are several interested citizens of Gisborne, New Zealand and many members of the Maori Community of Victoria. The Victorian Maori cultural group Nga Tangi Ata Iwi will perform after the formalities of the day are over. Invitations to the opening have been extended to Friends of botanic gardens across Victoria and interstate.

Melanie Kinsey

Friends of Warrnambool Botanic Gardens

WE HAVE SURVIVED an extremely wet and stormy winter extraordinarily well, having lost a couple of tiles off the band rotunda and a few minor trees. During the winter we carried out research into garden seats and bins, and the Council has given us twenty strong, good-looking seats, which have been carefully placed around the gardens. For the area surrounding the rotunda, built in 1913, and

in view of the impressive lakes we have chosen Victorian-style seating. We are grateful for information given by the Melbourne Friends. The seats will be donated by trusts and friends as memorials to their families, in some cases early Warrnambool pioneers.

At our annual meeting in July Marie Johnstone was elected President for the 1996-97 year. This will be an important year for the Friends because Warrnambool will be celebrating its 150th year in 1997. We are already planning to renovate the band rotunda, using funds raised from grants and friends. We are also redesigning the gardens at the main entrance, restoring them where possible to their original design as detailed by William Guilfoyle. This is being done with the help of John Hawker, State Horticulturist.

We are now drawing up a Plant Resource File, in the first instance registering all trees given to us through the *Flora for Victoria* project. This resource file will list important information on each tree, such as its origins, or why a particular tree was selected for us. For example, an *Agathis robusta* was grown from a seed taken from the original tree planted by Guilfoyle at his director's residence in the Melbourne Gardens. This Queensland kauri now stands proudly, almost a metre tall, near the band rotunda.

We have organised two bus trips for the Friends to visit interesting gardens in the Western District. These include *Turkeith* and *Mooleric*, both Guilfoyle-designed gardens.

Marigold Curtis

Friends of the Royal Botanic Gardens, Cranbourne

OUR NURSERY at the new works site in the Gardens was opened on 26 October by the Hon. Peter Howson, the Chairman of the Maud Gibson Trust, which has been a most significant supporter of the Gardens from its very beginning. The nursery is the outcome of a grant from Melbourne Parks and Waterways. However, much more than planned was achieved by obtaining donations of materials and discounts from local businesses, and many hours of work were given by the Friends who took part in working bees. The nursery will feature a glasshouse with a misting system and a temperature-controlled propagating bench, a concreted and roofed work area, potting benches, a potwashing bench, a storage shed and a fully-automated

irrigated growing area that is partly shaded. This is a community facility and will be run by our Growing Friends, mainly on an order basis, from seeds and cuttings collected from the Gardens, or from seeds supplied by the customer. Think about us next time you need plants grown for your garden.

On 16 November Rodger Elliot and Warren Worboys will lead a Practical Plant Propagation Workshop at the nursery. Booking is essential, on 059 963782.

The Australian Garden is progressing well, with the sketch design phase now complete. Work on the ground is continuing as planting and transplanting are being undertaken. Experiments are being conducted on any plants or bulbs that have to be removed because of the earthworks. This will require various extracting, moving, storing and replanting methods for several species. It will give us greater knowledge about the replanting of some Australian plants, and how to achieve the best result.

Neil Laird

Friends of the Queen Mary Botanic Gardens, St Arnaud

IN THE END it was a mere buggy-load of ratepayers which secured the Botanic Gardens for St Arnaud. Controversy had raged for years between those who wanted the prime site in the centre of the town for business development and those who wanted an 'Ornamental Reserve'. Finally, in 1884 the Council put it to a referendum, which was won by only eight votes out of 420.

Today, with the Ballarat by-pass now in operation, the preferred route to Mildura is via this old gold town and many are discovering for the first time the pleasures of the Queen Mary Gardens. They are situated in the main street opposite an unusually complete precinct of 19th-century public buildings that have remained unchanged for more than a century.

The area covered by the Gardens was originally a water reserve. Miners washed their gold in the creek which flowed through it and travellers watered their stock in a large dam, known as Jones' Dam. But by 1889 all this had changed, the Gardens had been planted and the dam had been transformed into an ornamental lake.

It is popularly believed that William Guilfoyle contributed to the design of the Gardens.

However, there is no evidence to support this belief beyond a reference in the local paper, *The Mercury*, which extolled 'the pleasures of a shady place to enjoy on Sunday afternoons, while admiring the beauties of imported shrubs and flowers which will be presented by the Curator of the Melbourne Botanical Gardens'. It is interesting that an early gardener, William Scott, left the job in 1896 to go to the Deniliquin Gardens, which bear a marked similarity to those he left in St Arnaud.

Scott was replaced by Frederick Beyer from Ballarat, who was to remain as Curator for more than thirty years. He was a prodigious collector and an admirable gardener, and under his care the Gardens flourished. Early photographs show his closely-planted shrub borders and his collection of oaks, temperate palms and conifers, all carefully labelled.

The layout of the Gardens has changed little over the years. A pair of handsome cast-iron gates was erected in 1915 as a memorial to a much-loved family doctor. These gates were placed at the main town intersection and involved a re-alignment of the main path through the Gardens. The creek was formalised into a stone canal as a means of work creation during the great depression. A footbridge over the canal is on a long axis, closed at one end by the portico of the Courthouse and by a pair of redwoods (long gone, but now replanted) at the opposite end.

But as the years went by the Gardens declined. Major trees were lost and not replaced. Beyer's lovely borders deteriorated and in some cases disappeared completely. The only major work was a cream-brick toilet block, which fulfilled the widespread belief that such facilities should be both ugly and obvious. So while many of the early trees, including a magnificent Bunya Bunya pine, remained, the Gardens were clearly in need of major plantings.

With the municipal restructure, St Arnaud became part of the Northern Grampians Shire. Fearing for the future of the Gardens a Friends group was formed by the local newspaper editor and former mayor Ella Ebery. The community rallied and with 140 members signed up the committee was able to go to the Commissioners with demonstrable public support.

Happily for the Friends, the Commissioners responded with enthusiasm. They immediately agreed to place the Gardens under the control of a local committee and to have a conservation study prepared. The committee worked on this with consultant Kevin Walsh and the Conser-

vation and Landscape Report was presented to the Council in July 1995.

And so it was that at a function in the Gardens last autumn a new era arrived for the Queen Mary Gardens. Trish van Loon Benson presented a wonderful collection of trees and shrubs as part of the Royal Botanic Gardens 150th anniversary celebrations and Eve Brunner of the Melbourne Friends (and a personal friend of St Arnaud) graciously launched the new conservation plan. Then she and Commissioner Holland planted the first of many major trees which were to go in over the winter.

The future of the Gardens is now secure and already the attention of the St Arnaud community is turning to their other landscape gem—Edna Walling's lovely (but sadly neglected) Pioneer Park. But that is another story.

Bryan Small

Albury Botanic Gardens

OVER THE LAST few months the staff managed to survive the invasion of 'On the Brink on Tour', a fast-moving conservation quiz game from the Australian Nature Conservation Agency. We hosted 750 children from 12 schools in our area, including Holbrook and Mulwala, and everyone had a great time. The staff did a great job of hosting the 30 shows and still managed to keep the Gardens in good shape. It was a great opportunity to show the children and teachers the need for conservation and how it is done.

We have been busily collecting historical data, photographs and slides, and putting old film footage onto video for our Garden Party on 17 November. It will be the finale to the opening of an exhibition at the Albury Regional Museum, on the 'History and Usage of the Albury Botanical Gardens'. The opening at the Museum will be followed by an historical walk along the river to the Gardens for the Garden Party.

We recently took delivery of a further 50 plaques to identify prominent trees, kindly donated by the Albury Horticultural Society. This completes their project, started several years ago, and will greatly benefit our visitors over the coming summer and in the years to come.

Paul Scannell

019147266

Friends of the Ballarat Botanic Gardens

OUR MAIN PROJECT for early 1996 has been the restoration of the Claxton Monument. Andrew Patience of Reuben Studios undertook this work, which was mainly funded by a very successful Gala Dinner in the Robert Clark Centre, between displays, held in November last year. A successful application to the Minister for Conservation and Environment provided extra funds. Our next project is the provision of a Graveograph engraving system for plant labels.

The Growing Friends continue to meet every Tuesday afternoon and propagate plants and make sales. There are sales also on every second Sunday in the month. This is necessary to keep stock moving, because of our restricted space. The sales provide a steady income.

The nursery and gardens staff are now tight business units, having won their respective contracts. Consequently, the Growing Friends are working towards having independent housing and materials. A propagation house has been completed and an attached shed is almost ready.

A Festival Manager and a Parks Service Officer are now operating from the Robert Clark Centre and this is providing the necessary public contact point for the Gardens. The guiding Friends have had an initial presence in the Centre while the Conservatory display is being changed, and this has proved successful with visitors. The guides meet on two mornings each month for theoretical and practical sessions alternately.

Our major fund-raising event for the later half of 1996 involves the Christmas display in the Conservatory. The Friends will open the display to the public for 12 days before Christmas from 5 pm to 9 pm. This is in conjunction with the local radio station 3BA for its Christmas appeal.

We now have 55 members.

Judith Bailey

Friends of Geelong Botanic Gardens

OUR ANNUAL Winter Luncheon was held in July and proved to be an outstanding success. The speaker was Noel O'Keefe, former horticultural manager of the Royal Botanic Gardens, Melbourne. In his excellent illustrated talk Noel focused on change in the Melbourne

Gardens in the landscape over time and changes to management since the creation of the Royal Botanic Gardens Board. Noel was extremely positive about these changes and was able to relate them to the Geelong Gardens and our future.

The Friends' Teahouse has enjoyed improved trading during September. Weekends are our busiest times; however, it is often difficult to keep the roster filled. We now carry stocks of our own specially-designed tea towel, which features the Japanese bronze cranes set in a border of ginkgo leaves, with an outer border of pelargonium leaves. It also incorporates the Friends' logo. Enid Mayfield, a botanic artist and one of our Friends, designed this exciting new piece of merchandise for us. We also sell aprons, carry bags and kneelers, all with our logo, at the Teahouse.

We were delighted to receive a visit by the Friends of Gisborne Botanic Gardens during September, when they were able to sample a guided walk and the Growing Friends nursery, which is always open on Wednesday mornings.

The Friends have recently bought portable shelving for use in the relocated reference library. A portable building has been refurbished in the amenities area of the Gardens, which will allow space for a meeting area and the Friends office. The Friends have obtained a community grant from the Council to help to set up further cataloguing and to organise the reference library on computer.

Recent activities have included an evening lecture by Geoff Carr of Ecology Australia Pty Ltd on environmental weeds and a visit to Rippon Lea to see the Adam Anderson exhibition. The Spring Plant Sale was held on 12 and 13 October. At our November meeting Jenny Smith will launch the second supplement to *Growing Together*, by George Jones.

Jayne Salmon

Friends of Benalla Botanical Gardens

AT OUR ANNUAL MEETING held on 7 August the following were elected for the year 1996-97:

President	Peter Stephenson
Vice-President	Philip Sutherland
Secretary	Brian Chandler
Treasurer	Miles Oldmeadow
Committee	Ethel Stephenson, Dulcie Sanderson, Dulcie Chandler, Lyn McMiken, Jane Farman, Bernard

Farman, Katia Fregon, Jess White (Benalla Garden Club), Richard Allen (Shire of Delatite)

Douglas March of the Melbourne-based W.S.C. Consultants and Impact Consulting Group spoke on 'The Residential Role of Open Space in Urban Settings'.

Preparations are well in hand by the local committee which is planning the provision and unveiling of the Sir Edward Dunlop memorial statue in the Gardens on Sunday 10 November. The unveiling will be performed by the Prime Minister, John Howard, and a very large audience is expected. This coincides with the Benalla Rose Festival Market Day in the Gardens.

The Delatite Shire Council has begun the initial work to redevelop the former caravan park area abutting the western end of the Gardens. We have been awaiting the start of this project for several years. Provision will be made in this area for additional parking for cars and buses and access to the Gardens. The caravan park toilet block is being upgraded as part of this project.

The Friends are currently arranging a bus tour to Castlemaine and Gisborne to see several private gardens and the botanic gardens in both towns. The tour starts on Friday 22 November at Benalla and returns on Sunday 24 November. Ian Huxley from Guildford will speak on Saturday evening at Castlemaine. Anyone interested in joining this tour should ring Katia Fregon at 057 62 3976.

Brian Chandler

Friends of the Royal Botanic Gardens, Melbourne

THE FRIENDS' Art of Botanical Illustration exhibition, at Mueller Hall until 5 November, is outstanding. For the first time, works were purchased by the Friends for the Gardens, for the State Botanical Collection. Exhibition sponsor ESSO also acquired five works. Almost half of the paintings had been sold in the first week of the show.

The Friends' Shop in the Gardens has had a record year, with an increase of \$44,400 over the previous year's takings, making the total for the year \$392,500. This result reflects both the skilled management of Jill Swann and the contribution of her volunteer assistants.

Success has become routine for Growing Friends' plant sales, and a result of \$23,500 in

mid-October rewarded the efforts of this active group. It is likely that the Growing Friends' operations will be moved to the Gardens' work area during the summer, in readiness for developments on the Old Melbourne Observatory site.

Plans and specifications for Observatory Gate have been completed, and are ready to go to tender as soon as sufficient funding has been secured for the project. For the time being, the Friends will continue to operate from the office in the Astronomer's Residence.

Following tradition, the Friends have invited the Minister responsible for the Royal Botanic Gardens, the Hon. Marie Tehan, to speak at the annual meeting on Monday 11 November. This meeting will mark the retirement of Sir Rupert Hamer, the Friends' President, Eve Brunner, a foundation member of the Council, and Philip Ayton, who has served on the Council for 12 years. All three have made outstanding contributions to the affairs of the Friends.

The year will be wound up with a Christmas dinner in the Gardens' reception centre on Wednesday 18 December.

Thinking of celebrations, a second delivery of the Friends' 150th anniversary wine (Chateau Tahbilk cabernet sauvignon and marsanne) will be well-timed for Christmas drinking and gift-giving. Telephone the office (03 9650 6398) for ordering details.

The next major event in the Gardens' 150th anniversary celebrations will be an exhibition in the Mueller Hall from 22 November to 26 January. Photographer Bill Bachman and artists Lin Onus and John Wolseley accompanied the commemorative scientific expedition to the Northern Territory in April, retracing the steps of Gregory's party in 1855. Their work will be shown with botanic illustrations by Anita Barley of specimens collected on the expedition.

Redesign and planting of the Australian Rainforest Border (along the Birdwood Avenue boundary of the Gardens) has been completed. New interpretation signs and plant labels are putting the finishing touches to this major project, made possible by a generous donation.

The international standing of the Gardens was underlined by the success of the 1996 Commemorative Conference held at the University of Melbourne from 30 September to 5 October. About 300 people participated in four associated meetings, including several distinguished overseas speakers. The Premier presented the 1996 Mueller Medal to Dr Sophie Ducker. The medal is awarded annually by the Australian and New Zealand Association for the

Advancement of Science. The Baron himself made a spirited contribution to one of the conference dinners, thanks to Campbell McComas.

Volume 3 of the *Flora of Victoria* (towards which the Friends' Trust Fund contributed \$10,000) and the first volume of *Fungi of Australia* were launched at the conference.

The Grand Ball held at Government House on 28 June was a superb social and financial success. The organising committee convened by the Friends has been congratulated for raising \$45,000 for the Gardens; generous sponsorship and donations in kind complemented the efforts of the Committee in achieving this splendid result.

Congratulations are also due for Rod Dunstan, the Gardens' Education Officer, who has been awarded a Churchill Fellowship. Rod has been outstandingly successful in attracting students and teachers to educational programs in the Gardens. He will visit botanic gardens in Britain and North America in 1997.

The Gardens' Director, Dr Philip Moors, visited ten leading botanic gardens in Asia and Europe in July. His verdict: 'The general quality of our own horticultural management, administration, functions and events, visitor services and education is the equal of anything I encountered. Nevertheless, we will benefit from the ideas, information and experience from these gardens as we strive to do even better here.'

Heather Ironmonger

Friends of Kings Park

(adapted from the Spring Newsletter)

ON MONDAY 15 MAY, at about 8.30 pm, a tornado starting to the west of the Park raged across the south-west boundary into the Park. It devastated Poole Triangle, sweeping through the Crawley section, along Forrest Drive and across the river into South Perth, where it caused damage to housing.

On Poole Triangle a large conifer was felled and branches were torn from lemon-scented gums and ironbarks, several of which were subsequently removed because they were so badly damaged. A large native peppermint was uprooted at the end of Park Avenue, powerlines brought down, and glass from Strathern apartments was thrown onto Forrest Drive, hundreds of metres away. As a result of the tornado some of the Park roads were closed for up to a

week while damaged trees were made safe and debris removed. Damage where the tornado crossed the southern escarpment is still visible from Mounts Bay Road, along the Swan River edge of the Park.

Association of Friends of Botanic Gardens (Victoria) Inc.

President: John Harper

Vice-President: Lyn Middleton

Secretary: Lawrence Cohn

Treasurer: David Baumgartner

Immediate Past President: Max Pawsey

Committee: Eve Brunner, Joan Garner, Melanie Kinsey, 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: 03 9650 7723

