



BOTANIC NEWS

AUTUMN 1990

FROM THE PRESIDENT

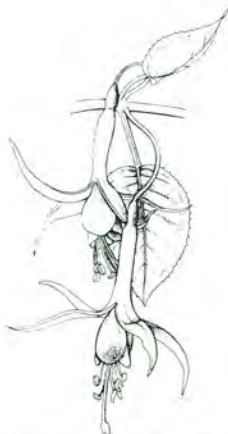
To have two such illustrious hostesses as Dame Elizabeth Murdoch, and the Queen of Hearts, on two consecutive days, was a great start to Friends' functions in a new decade! Evening summer light enhances the beauty of gardens, and our picnic supper beside Cruden Farm's lake, and Alice dancing with the Mock Turtle could not have had two better settings.

With such a flying start and with the membership just exceeding one thousand, our expectations are high that the Activities Sub-Committee's coming functions will continue to increase in quality and quantity. The Friends' Shop continues its successful trading at the western end of the Kiosk with a changing stock of botanic merchandise. The summer season is the peak trading time, with the Gardens well used by people. Last winter the Friends' budget was exceeded by timing the Celia Rosser exhibition in July. We should endeavour to have a lucrative winter activity each year, but that particular exhibition is a hard act to follow. The Growing Friends' Plant Sale on 18 November was a great success and with the better facilities now operating the Growing Friends should continue to flourish.

As you walk around the Royal Botanic Gardens the projects funded by the Friends are becoming more and more evident. These observations should give every member of the Friends great satisfaction and pleasure, because without our efforts and the Gardens staff's excellent implementation, many of these projects could not be executed.

With compliments,

David Wilkinson
President



Fuchsia 'Mrs. W. Rendle'

MEMBERS' ACTIVITIES

AUTUMN GARDEN TOUR

Friday 23 to Sunday 25 March inclusive.

As expected this three-day tour to north central Victoria is fully booked and has a substantial waiting list.

To confirm your booking please forward the balance of the tour cost by Tuesday 13 March. (The total tour cost is \$256 plus \$20 per night for a single room.) A detailed itinerary will be forwarded with your receipt.

For any further information phone the Friends' office 650 6398 or Golda Isaac 817 5640.

VOLUNTEERS' MORNING COFFEE

Wednesday 28 March at 10.15 am (separate invitation).

KAY FAIRLEY AND NORTH BORNEO

Morning Coffee on Monday 23 April at 10.15 am at the National Herbarium, Birdwood Avenue, South Yarra with Kay Fairley, one of our Friends and a Voluntary Guide, who has recently visited North Borneo and would enjoy sharing her experience with us – the wonderful array of plants and trees – rhododendrons growing on trees, oak trees with leaves of immense size, many orchid species, mosses, ferns and trees in abundance. Mt. Kinabalu 13,000 feet, is the only mountain in the region, with many types of plants growing at different altitudes.

Members: \$3.00

Others: \$4.00

RSVP: 19 April 1990 on enclosed booking form.



Fuchsia 'George Monks'

SIGNIFICANT TREES

Sunday 29 April at 9.30 am

We are delighted that John Hawker, Horticultural Project Officer at the National Herbarium and also responsible for the Significant Tree Register will take us on a tour of the gardens at the University of Melbourne followed by a bus tour around the northern suburbs; John will identify the significant trees on the Register. Our good friend, Dr George Scott the Master of Queen's College at the University of Melbourne, is arranging for us to have morning coffee at Queen's College before the bus tour of the suburbs.

John has suggested that we meet in the courtyard at the northern end of Wilson Hall and under the cedar tree at 9.30 am. The tour will finish back at the University at 1.00 pm.

Members: \$12.00

Others: \$15.00

RSVP: 24 April 1990 on enclosed booking form
(Numbers will be limited to 45 – one bus load).

NEWCOMERS' WELCOME

Wednesday 2 May at 10.15 am (separate invitation).

BIRDS OF THE ROYAL BOTANIC GARDENS

Wednesday 16 May at 10.15 am at the National Herbarium.

We are pleased to announce that at a morning coffee gathering, Miss Helen Aston, Taxonomic Botanist at the National Herbarium and also an avid ornithologist, will give an introductory talk illustrated with coloured slides on the birds that enhance the Gardens.

Members: \$3.00

Others: \$4.00

RSVP: 11 May 1990 on enclosed booking form.

GARDEN EXPERTS

Tuesday 12 June at 7.45 pm at the National Herbarium.

Come and hear the experts speak about other experts in their various fields relating to gardens.

Dr John Foster, Senior Lecturer in the History Department at the University of Melbourne, will outline the history of the nurserymen, Taylor and Sangster.

Mr Tom Garnett, the well known educationalist, journalist and garden lover, will speak about the horticulturalist, Alister Clark, famous for his roses.

Mr Michael Looker, Superintendent of the Royal Botanic Gardens, will speak on the Nobelius Nursery created by Karl Nobelius in the late 19th Century in the Dandenong area.

Supper will be served.

Members: \$3.00

Others: \$4.00

RSVP: 8 June 1990 on enclosed booking form.

FUTURE ACTIVITIES

Among future activities are the following:—

NORTH BORNEO TOUR

September 9-27, 1990

This tour filled up immediately the announcement hit the press! We have a waiting list.

Participants in the tour will be invited to a meeting with the Travel Agent when information will be available and questions answered.

PORTLAND TOUR WITH DR JIM WILLIS

By popular demand it is planned to conduct this tour at the end of October this year. Details will be published in the *Winter Botanic news* in early June. No bookings please until after the first week in June.

BLEAK HOUSE, the popular Rose Garden Centre of Mrs Susan Irvine at Malmsbury. We are planning a day tip – to include at least one other interesting garden – in November.

CHRISTMAS DINNER. This popular function will be held on Friday 14 December.

THANK YOU TO DAVID AND BIBI WILKINSON

Under the Victoria's Gardens' Scheme David and Bibi opened their beautiful garden to the public on 5 November last year and directed the \$360.15 raised to the Friends of the Royal Botanic Gardens. On 12 January they invited the Friends to see their garden and refreshed them with cool drinks.

We are grateful indeed to David and Bibi and on behalf of all Friends thank them very much.

RECENT ACTIVITIES

A *Council Dinner* was held at the Kiosk in the Gardens on 16 November to thank Mrs Beth Higgs, the Convenor and Immediate Past President of the Friends and Mr Frank Phillips, who retired after nearly six years as President.

Christmas Dinner 15/12/89. 80 members enjoyed a happy evening at the Kiosk. Our warm thanks to the Gardens Management and Staff and to the donors of our raffle items:—

Stephanie's Restaurant, Mitton's Restaurant, Myer Stores Ltd., Safeway Toorak, Trojan Australia Pty. Ltd.

"*Alice in Wonderland*" 11/1/90. 100 Members attended this latest very successful production put on by FEIPP in the Gardens.

"*A Midsummer Night's Dream*" 18/1/90 – preceded by a BYO picnic tea – a very enjoyable evening.

Heronswood, Heronwater and Cruden Farm 12/1/90 – a beautiful day – two coachloads of members enjoyed these three beautiful gardens.

TOUR RE-UNION

A reunion of the Wilsons Promontory tour group was held at Glenara, Bulla on the 20 January. Many thanks to Ruth Rundle for sharing her delightful home and garden.

The opportunity was taken on this occasion to celebrate the 80th birthday of Dr Jim Willis and the 50th wedding anniversary of Ruth and John Funder – congratulations to all three.

EXPLORING JAPAN 1990

The Royal Botanic Gardens (Sydney) in conjunction with the Australian Museum Society (Sydney) have arranged a 19 days expedition to tour the seldom visited villages and natural areas of the Japan Alps. The May tour is booked out and another one is being planned for later in the year.

An "Invitation to explore Japan" has been extended to the Friends of the Royal Botanic Gardens, Melbourne. If any Victorian Friends are interested in joining this second tour please contact our Executive Officer, Margaret MacGregor on 650 6398. The approximate cost ex Sydney is \$5,200.

Dr Ben Wallace, Botanist from the R.B.G., Sydney will escort the group (limited to 15) from Sydney.

FRIENDS' SHOP

If you are looking for a gift for a friend overseas or at home, we have quite a large selection of gifts with a botanical flavour and all Australian made.

Should you find it hard to choose a gift for a particular person – what about a gift voucher from our Shop. This is enclosed in a card with J. H. Carse's beautiful painting of an early view of the Botanic Gardens.

A new gift idea for children! A jigsaw puzzle from a photograph of various scenes in the gardens.

We still have a few Banksia prints by Celia Rosser.

There is a 10% discount on purchases of \$20.00 and upwards.

More volunteers are needed to help in the Shop. If you would like to help give Mrs Margot Buckeridge, the Shop Manager, a call on 820 1125.

GROWING FRIENDS

\$24,000 was received last year from our plant sales and the Growing Friends are already working hard towards the 1990 sale.

This year we hope to offer an even wider range of plants generally not available in commercial nurseries. We are much indebted to the Royal Botanic Gardens' staff for their willing advice and help in selecting the material that will be the basis of our next sale.

We have also had some generous offers of rare and desirable material from private collections. These are most welcome and we are extremely grateful.

The Friends' Shop is now selling some advanced plants and packaged spring flowering bulbs. These are replenished each Friday and are well worth investigating.

We aim to make 1990 even more successful than 1989!

HAVE YOU LOST A SHAWL?

A very attractive cream coloured wool shawl was left behind after the Friends' Christmas Dinner on 15 December. It is being held in the Friends' office. Ring 650 6398 if it's yours.

SPECIAL BENEFITS TO FRIENDS

Fryers' Nursery, 589 Glenferrie Road, Hawthorn, Idaho Nurseries, 420 Waverley Road, East Malvern and The Arts Bookshop, 1067 High Street, Armadale offer special discounts to Friends on production of their current membership card.

There is now another nursery where Friends can obtain a discount. This is The Gardener's Bulleen Nursery, 105 Bridge Street, Bulleen. The discount is 5% (on plants only) and, of course, a current membership card must be shown.



White Vireya Rhododendron

FROM THE GARDENS

"Changing colours" is an appropriate theme for autumn in the Gardens. Golden yellow, red, orange and all the subtle shades in between make a colourful mural of the Gardens.

Sunny autumn days remind us of the power of the sun and if you stroll down to the Vireya Rhododendron Garden, you will witness the fruits of its energy. The sprinkler system installed in this garden is solar-powered – the collectors gathering energy to power the batteries which run the sprinkler system. This system has been such a success that a similar one is being considered for Cranbourne.

Have you entered the Gardens through 'A' Gate lately? If not, it's worth going down there to look at the gates which have recently been restored. The Gardens will be restoring all of the gates so that the original beauty of these fine old structures is conserved. And if you are venturing from the Kiosk after dusk – have no fear of tripping – the recently installed bollard lights will guide your way.

Gardeners are continuing to give half-hour talks to the public, and this autumn, trees and the tree crew, rainforest plants and palms are the focus. Details can be found in the Autumn Brochure.

The Guides are now starting all their rostered walks at the Visitor Centre and, if numbers are any indication, this has proved to be a successful change. It has also greatly simplified their publicity.

Special walks during autumn include a slide presentation and walk during Heritage Week and another walk in March as part of a joint National Trust tour of Melbourne's Gardens.

At Cranbourne a master plan for the Botanic Garden Zone has been developed and the first plantings (according to this plan) are now in the ground. This first area consists of Australian Mallee species. Concepts for the visitor orientation centre are also being considered.

So, there's never a dull moment in the Gardens. Come and enjoy this magnificent landscape which is made up of so many plants from around the world. The Gardens is a precious resource to be enjoyed and cared for by all.

Roslyn Andrew
Interpretations Officer

The Friends of the Royal Botanic Gardens, Melbourne Incorporated has been formed to stimulate further interest in the Gardens and National Herbarium and to support and assist them whenever possible.