



# BOTANIC NEWS

FRIENDS OF THE ROYAL BOTANIC GARDENS, MELBOURNE INC.

## AUTUMN 1996

### FROM THE PRESIDENT

The year of celebration, 1996, has begun and it is already clear that the sesquicentenary of our Gardens and the centenary of the death of von Mueller is going to be historic in very many ways.

The inclusion of the three-hectare Observatory site in the Gardens, and the conversion of the old buildings into a Garden Gate precinct with the aid of a \$2.9 million funding grant from the State Government, will be realised this year; the Gardens will have a new entrance opposite the Shrine, a new forecourt, and a host of new features to welcome and assist the visitor.

The Friends, of course, are vitally involved, not only in the celebrations themselves, but in changes of location and operation.

The office will move some time this year to the Entrance Lodge right at the new main gate; arrangements have been made for the Growing Friends to relocate in the Gardens' nursery area, and the Botanical Illustrators seem likely to have access to new facilities in the Observatory buildings.

All this is most welcome, coming on top of the dramatic developments in the Gardens themselves over the past three years, and the Friends share the enthusiasm of the Director, Board and staff for these further enhancements to the prestige and attractions of the Royal Botanic Gardens.

It is pleasing to report a steady increase in membership; the Gardens' 150th birthday provides a great opportunity for each Friend to recruit a new member.

**Sir Rupert Hamer**  
President

150

See Page 3 for details of our **Historical Lectures series** - a major event organised by the Friends for the Gardens' 150th birthday.

Please note that the first lecture only will begin at 6.00pm. We will serve light refreshments from 5.15pm to sustain members of the audience coming directly from work.

**YOU MAY OBTAIN A COPY OF THE GARDENS' CELEBRATIONS PROGRAM FROM RECEPTION AT THE HERBARIUM.**

### CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

The year of the 150th Anniversary of the Royal Botanic Gardens has arrived and the celebrations have started! Planning for the Sesquicentenary has been under way for three years, guided by a Board Committee chaired by Mrs Marian Brookes and managed by our consultant, Nancy Staub. Something will be happening in every month of the year - there is a remarkable range of events on the program, from exhibitions to gardeners' talks, behind-the-scenes tours, collecting expeditions and botanical conferences. We are especially pleased that the Friends, Voluntary Guides and the Plant Craft Cottage are all contributing major events to the program.

The celebrations commenced with a special function for current RBG staff at Gardens House on 8 February. The Director thanked the staff for their enthusiastic participation in the planning and preparations for the 150th

Anniversary, and honoured the essential role which they and their many predecessors have played in caring for one of Victoria's greatest assets. A special anniversary dinner took place in the grounds of Gardens House on 24 February, followed on Sunday 25 February by our Foundation Day celebrations launched by the Governor of Victoria and the Minister for Conservation and Environment. Many thousands of visitors enjoyed strolling through the Gardens - which looked magnificent - and watching the entertainment, eating at the food stalls, studying the outdoor Sculpture Exhibition, and going behind-the-scenes in the National Herbarium. The RBG Board is most grateful to everyone who worked so effectively to ensure that the day was such a success.

Final plans are being settled for the collecting expedition to the Victoria River region of the Northern Territory. The RBG is collaborating with the Northern Territory Herbarium for this expedition, which commemorates the trek through that area by Ferdinand Mueller and the Gregory brothers in 1855. We particularly appreciate the Friends' generous donation of \$25,000 towards the costs of the expedition. It will last from 9 April to 23 April and six RBG staff will be participating. Two artists, Lin Onus and John Wolseley, and an Australian Geographic photographer and writer will also be accompanying the expedition.

**GROWING FRIENDS SALE**  
Saturday 23 March 10.00 - 4.00  
Sunday 24 March 10.00 - 3.00



The Government's major 'gift' to the RBG for the 150th Anniversary – the Garden Gate developments at the Observatory site – is making steady progress.

The architects have begun detailed design work on the buildings and landscapes, and planning permits have been issued by the City of Melbourne and the Historic Buildings Council. The main construction works are likely to begin in August.

The RBG Board was saddened by the death of Dr James Willis AM in November 1995. He made a remarkable contribution to the National Herbarium and to botanical science during his life. The RBG has established the Jim Willis Fellowship Fund to commemorate the man and his achievements. The fellowship will be awarded annually to support the training of students in plant and fungal systematics. Mr Roger Riordan, Managing Director of Cybec Pty Ltd and a life-long friend of Jim Willis, has started the fund with a donation of \$20,000. The RBG is seeking to extend the capital base of the fund and welcomes donations from individuals or clubs and societies.

**W R M Irvine**  
**Chairman**

*At the request of the Board  
of the Royal Botanic Gardens,  
the Friends of the Royal Botanic Gardens  
present*

## THE GRAND BALL

*on Friday 28 June 1996 at 7.00pm  
in the ballroom at Government House*

His Excellency, the Governor and Mrs McGarvie  
will be present.

The Ball will celebrate the 150th anniversary of the Royal Botanic Gardens, Melbourne and Baron von Mueller's birthday on 30 June. It will also commemorate the 100th anniversary of his death. Mueller was the Government Botanist from 1853 to 1896, and first Director of the Gardens from 1852 to 1873.

**Cost: \$150 per person**  
**Dinner and dancing**

**Dress: Black tie**

*For an invitation with further details, please  
contact the Friends' office on 9650 6398*

## AUTUMN ACTIVITIES

### FILM LUNCHEON

*SENSE AND SENSIBILITY*

**Thursday 14 March at 11.00am**  
Trak Cinema, 445 Toorak Road, Toorak

Just released in Melbourne, this film is based on Jane Austen's first novel, written 200 years ago. *Sense and Sensibility* marks the first big screen adaptation of this classic romantic comedy.

The cast includes Emma Thompson, Hugh Grant and Alan Rickman.

Lunch (sandwiches, cake and tea/coffee/drink) will follow the film. Parking in Tintern Avenue or Safeway carpark.

Admission \$11.00  
RSVP 8 March on enclosed booking form

**Members are reminded that we request a stamped self-addressed envelope to be sent with your booking if you wish your entree card tickets to be posted by return mail. Otherwise your name will be recorded on a list available at each function to verify your payment.**

### GROWING FRIENDS

Come, buy a plant from the Growing Friends' Nursery.

If you want to give a plant as a present but are not sure what to buy, then a Gift Voucher will allow the recipient to make a choice from the Nursery or at the Spring or Autumn sales. Gift vouchers are now available from the Friends' office or the Growing Friends' Nursery for any amount you wish to nominate.

There is a wonderful selection of plants at the Nursery. It is a lovely sight at the moment, with many plants in full flower - well worth a visit before the Autumn sale so that you can choose at your leisure. *However, some of the plants specially promoted for the sale (on the back of the enclosed flyer) will not be available until the sale.*

Many of the plants start as cuttings, taken early on Friday mornings during the year from plants in the Botanic Gardens. This season they have been striking and bursting out of their pots within a very short time. The Growing Friends have been very busy potting-on these cuttings so they are strong, healthy plants ready for the sale. As usual there are some really interesting plants not readily available elsewhere.

**continued on Page 4**



## HISTORICAL LECTURE SERIES

The Friends, together with the Royal Historical Society of Victoria, will present a lecture series to mark the Gardens' 150th birthday celebrations. The dates and speakers are as follows:

**Thursday 21 March at 6.00pm**

**Prof. Weston Bate**

President, Royal Historical Society of Victoria  
Former Professor of Australian Studies at Deakin University

***Public Perceptions of the Royal Botanic Gardens***

*Public perceptions of the Gardens have helped to define their purpose and layout as important indicators of Melbourne's ethos. This lecture explores how the Gardens became an icon and the way threats to their integrity have been handled.*

**Wednesday 17 April at 8.00pm**

**Mr Richard Aitken**

Historian and architect; director of Nigel Lewis Richard Aitken Pty Ltd

***Buildings and Embellishments of the Royal Botanic Gardens: From Wardian Cases to Volcanoes***

*Structures ranging from the glazed, sealed cases that carried plants on ships' decks to the more decorative and recreational buildings all have a place in the Gardens' history. And who knows the story of Guilfoyle's volcanoes?*

**Tuesday 23 April at 8.00pm**

**Ms Eve Almond**

Former Interpretations Officer, Royal Botanic Gardens

***Picturing the Gardens***

*An illustrated talk tracing the Gardens' changing landscape over the last 150 years. It will include original items: maps, documents, photographs and artwork from the Gardens' own extensive archives.*

**Wednesday 8 May at 8.00pm**

**Mr Darren Watson**

Archivist, Australian Archives, who undertook the Royal Botanic Gardens Oral History Project

***'Propagators, Seedsmen and Boy Labourers': Staffing the Gardens, 1846-1970***

*An overview of the staff experience in the Botanic Gardens from their foundation to 1970. This will include a look at changing structures and working conditions.*

**Monday 20 May at 8.00pm**

**Dr Andrew Brown-May**

Research Associate, Department of History, Monash University

***Indifference, Audacity and Disobedience: Social Landscape and the Suppression of Nuisances in Mueller's Botanic Gardens, 1850s-1870s***

*In the surveillance of straying cows, immodest bathers, vandals and other nuisances, an aesthetic and moral language of unsightliness, delicacy, respectability, ornamentation and inconvenience was used to construct an ideal place. Human behaviour as well as the natural world was classified and controlled.*

All lectures will be held in the National Herbarium Hall, Birdwood Ave, South Yarra. Most will be illustrated.

The 6.00pm lecture on 21 March will be preceded by refreshments from 5.15pm. Supper will be served after the other four 8.00pm lectures.

The first lecture on 21 March will follow the Descendants Day function at the Gardens, and the launch of the *Victorian Historical Journal* issue commemorating the Gardens 150th anniversary. Copies of the *Journal* will be available for \$10.00 at each lecture. A welcome addition to the literature on the RBG, it contains nine articles, many historical photographs, and a valuable bibliography.

Cost:	Friends: \$8.00 single lecture	Others: \$10.00 single lecture
	\$35 series	\$45.00 series

RSVP on enclosed booking form.



*Growing Friends continued*

The Growing Friends Autumn Sale is on 23 and 24 March. The Nursery is open for sales to members only, on Fridays between 10.00am and 1.00pm, but will be closed on 15, 22 and 29 March.

Anyone who spends \$100 or more at the March sale will be given a \$6 voucher redeemable at the next major sale.

Hope to see you there!



## BEGONIA FESTIVAL IN THE ROBERT CLARK CONSERVATORY, BALLARAT BOTANICAL GARDENS

**Monday 25 March 1996**

The Friends of Ballarat Botanical Gardens have invited the Melbourne Friends for a tour of their spectacular new Conservatory and Resource Centre. We will also have an opportunity to view the recently restored trout hatchery (over 100 years old) which is attached to the Gardens.

The Ballarat Friends will provide our lunch, and will join us, together with the Geelong Friends who are also visiting that day.

Before returning to Melbourne we will visit Lambley Nursery at Ascot, near Creswick, which specialises in perennials (three acres of perennials).

Our coach leaves the National Gallery at 9.00am sharp and will return between 5.00pm and 5.30pm.

Cost: \$28

RSVP by 20 March on enclosed booking form



*Ladies on a park bench* by Gunther Kopietz, one of the more controversial works on the RBG Sculpture Walk. Located near the Friends' Shop, it is already a favourite target for photographers. The exhibition, curated by Ken Scarlett, will be in place until 26 May.

## AUTUMN AT EMERALD, SASSAFRAS AND TECOMA

**Bus Trip on Monday 22 April**

Lysbeth and Bill Allison have invited the Friends to visit their Emerald garden which overlooks Cardinia Reservoir, and which will be full of autumn colour. Lysbeth and Bill tend their garden themselves and enjoy using only organic materials to nurture the plants.

After a short drive through the Dandenongs we shall have lunch at Chudleigh Park, Sassafras. Brian and Mary Metcalf have recently opened a gallery-tearoom in a setting of five acres of gardens. The gardens are landscaped into terraces, where superb specimens of sequoias, Douglas firs, English larch, yews, spruces, as well as rhododendrons, camellias and native ferns grow to perfection. Plants as tiny as the native violets and as large as the towering sequoias of 40-50 metres all thrive in the beautiful mountain soil, and native birds are attracted to the garden. Mary's father, Harry Myer, was in charge of the Director's 'vegie' garden and lived in E-gate Lodge during the time Mr Pescott was Director of the Royal Botanic Gardens.

Our next stop will be the George Tindale Memorial Gardens where we may stroll through eight acres of woodland garden. Plants are for sale there.

To round out the day, we'll stop in Tecoma to visit Horatio Jones's 'Kerosine Tin' house ... a place to stir the imagination - 'a tinpot palace; a triumph over hardship' - a poignant story. Listed on the Register of the National Estate, this home became an occasional retreat for some of the leading figures in Melbourne's arts community including Arthur Streeton, C.J. Dennis, Tom Roberts and Hepzibah Menuhin. Horatio Jones was friend and neighbour, as a boy, of Baron von Mueller and the house contains some pieces given to him by the Baron.

The bus will leave from the National Gallery, St Kilda Road at 9.00am sharp, to return at approximately 5.30pm. The all-inclusive charge for bus, morning tea, lunch and entrance fees will be \$33.

RSVP by 15 April on enclosed booking form.

## AUTUMN WALK IN THE RBG

Join the Voluntary Guides for a walk in the Royal Botanic Gardens on **Thursday 2 May 1996**.

Meet at 'F' Gate near the Herbarium at 10.30am. No charge.

*If you book for this walk and are then unable to come, please let us know (tel. 9650 6398), as smaller numbers mean we need less Voluntary Guides.*

RSVP on enclosed booking form by 26 April.



**Creating the Esso Rainforest**

21 May

*See Botanical Illustrators section***ANNEMIEKE MEIN PREVIEW****Thursday 30 May at 10.30am**

An exhibition of Annemieke Mein's textile works, depicting natural history through machine embroidery, will be a popular highlight of the Gardens' 150th birthday celebrations.

The Friends will host a preview of this exhibition in the Herbarium Hall on Thursday 30 May at 10.30am. Morning tea/coffee will be served. Queues form whenever Annemieke's work is shown, so here's a chance to beat the rush and view the exhibition in comfort.

Esso Australia is sponsoring the exhibition, which will be staged between 31 May and 14 July. The Dutch-born artist's observation and love of nature is interpreted with breath-taking skill, using silk, cotton, linen, wool, feathers and furs to create *The Fabric of Nature*.

Approximately 40 major textile wall works and sculptures made between 1980 and 1996 will be shown. Fifteen have not been exhibited previously in Melbourne.

Cost includes entry and catalogue:

Friends	\$10
Others	\$14

RSVP by 23 May on enclosed booking form

**LIFE MEMBERS - A NEW CLASS**

Like many other societies, the Friends can now accept Members who have paid a lump sum to become Members for life. The amount payable depends on the age at the time of becoming a Life Member and the then-current annual subscription.

For a person aged 50 or less - 15 times the annual subscription

For a person aged 51 to 70 - 10 times the annual subscription

For a person aged 71 or more - 5 times the annual subscription

For example, a prospective Ordinary member aged 60, for whom the present annual subscription would be \$26, could become a Life Member by payment of a lump sum of \$260.

Further information may be obtained from the Friends' Office.

**BOTANICAL ILLUSTRATORS****CREATING THE ESSO RAINFOREST****Tuesday 21 May from 10.00am****National Herbarium Hall**

Richard Barley, Assistant Director with responsibility for Botanic Gardens Division, will give an illustrated talk on the plants featured in the Rainforest Atrium in Esso House, and the role of the Royal Botanic Gardens in developing this exciting project.

Everyone is welcome! These quarterly meetings are never limited to the Botanical Illustrators.

Morning coffee/tea from 10.00am

Talk 10.30am

Admission: Friends \$5.00      Others \$10.00

RSVP by 16 May on enclosed booking form

**EXHIBITION BULLETIN**

*The Art of Botanical Illustration*  
10 October - 5 November



We are delighted to welcome Esso Australia as the major sponsor for our exhibition this year, highlighting the role of the Royal Botanic Gardens in developing and maintaining the magnificent Victorian rainforest in the atrium of Esso's new building at Southbank. Illustrations of some of the beautiful plants growing there will be included in the exhibition.

Entry forms for those interested in showing their work at this exhibition will be available by application through the next Friends' newsletter (Winter edition). Selection will be in the first week of September.

**Reminder:** all exhibitors must be financial members of the Friends of the Royal Botanic Gardens at 30 June 1996.

**FRIENDS SUMMER ACTIVITIES**

Friends' Christmas Dinner - 15 December

A Visit to 'The Johnston Collection' - 25 January

*The Secret Garden* - 2 February

A Summer's Day on the Bellarine Peninsula - 5 February

Botanical Illustrators. *Ellis Rowan - Her Life and Art* - 6 February

A Summer Walk through the Botanic Gardens - 14 February

Garden Party at Gardens House - 26 February

Botanical Illustrators - workshop with Anita Barley





*Temple of the Winds*



*Umbrellas by the lake*



*The Herb Garden*

## THE GARDENS ON CANVAS

Anne Marie Graham, at the age of 71, has set herself a workload that will keep her occupied well into the first decade of the 21st century.

As a labour of love, she has resolved to produce 100 oil paintings of the Royal Botanic Gardens in all seasons, and estimates an output of about 12 paintings a year. Twelve have already been completed and exhibited, while preparatory sketches have been done for another six. Anne is about to move house to live closer to her work.

**Four of Anne's paintings have just been reproduced on blank greeting cards and will be on sale in the Friends' Shop; they depict the Oak Lawn in autumn, daffodils in spring, the Herb Garden and the paved lakeside area outside the Tea Rooms. The Gardens Shop will sell another of Anne's paintings: the Temple of the Winds, on a blank card.**

Anne's magnum opus, a large triptych of the Gardens selected by John Truscott for the Victorian Arts Centre, will be familiar to many in poster or card form. Her distinctive style bears some relationship to naive art, but is more expressive. Anne confesses that she's not schooled in botanical names, but takes particular care about the details of plants; she tries to learn all she can about her subject before interpreting and stylising the essence of a scene. She likes to include people in her paintings.

**Look out for new photographic postcards, too, produced by the Friends' Shop for the Gardens' sesquicentenary.**

### FRIENDS' SHOP

*Dear Friends,*

We have been watching the Ornamental Lake rise, lap gently over the deck and fall, the lawns greener than green and the trees looking clean and beautiful; we are pleased to now have some summer at last.

The 150th year celebrations will bring a lot of interesting stock into the shop as the party progresses; most of it is organised around your gardening activities.

The response to our request for more volunteers was wonderful...many thanks, our rosters are now full. We have had three very busy and profitable months up to the end of January, and a return this year of the cruise ships has seen a vast array of overseas visitors buying from us.

Please come and visit us when you're next in the Gardens enjoying the 150th celebrations.

*Regards,  
Jill Swann*

### BOTANICAL EMBROIDERERS' WORKSHOP

Classes for botanical embroidery with Wanda McPherson commence on Monday 18 March 1996 at 1.00pm in the Conference Room at the Astronomer's Residence. Newcomers are welcome.

At the first class you may choose to translate a favourite garden picture into embroidery, or make a scissors case, which will require just under 1/4 metre of floral fabric, a little less of a matching plain fabric, and thread. Don't forget your basic sewing kit.

Further classes for 1996 will be held on Mondays from 1.00pm - 3.30pm on the following dates:  
15 April; 13 May; 17 June; 8 July; 12 August;  
9 September; 14 October; 11 November; 9 December.

The cost per class is \$10. If you would like more information, please telephone Lesley Clark on tel. 9807 3984.



## THE OTHER 1996 COMMEMORATION

On 10 October 1996, Australia Post and the German government are to jointly issue a postage stamp to commemorate the centenary of Ferdinand von Mueller's death.

A manager from Australia Post's Philatelic group was to have discussions in Germany at the end of February about the final details. RBG Librarian Helen Cohn and Sara Maroske from the Mueller Correspondence Project provided her with a wealth of information and images to assist the design process.

## REMEMBERING JIM WILLIS

A host of material reflecting Dr Jim Willis's lifetime of work in botany has been donated by his family to the RBG library in the National Herbarium. There are diaries, reprints, notes of papers and talks, correspondence with many people, books and other items dating back to the 1930s.

The books are being incorporated into the general collection, and eventually all the material will be catalogued and available to researchers.

Anyone wishing to make a donation to the Jim Willis Fellowship Fund (see Chairman's Report on page 2) may send a cheque made out in favour of Royal Botanic Gardens with an accompanying note stating that it is for the Fellowship. Donations of \$2 and over are tax deductible; note your name and address for a receipt to be sent.

### Desma Deans

We note with regret that one of our earliest Friends, Desma Deans, died last November.

Desma and her sister Lorna were particularly keen participants in Friends' tours, although less able to join in our activities after moving to Patterson Lakes.

## Association of Friends of Botanic Gardens (Vic.) Inc.

The 6th Annual Conference of the Association will be held at the NarreWarren offices of the City of Casey on Saturday and Sunday 27 and 28 April 1996. The Friends of Wilson Botanic Park Inc. at Berwick have arranged an excellent programme of speakers, discussions and visits, and are hoping for a large number of participants.

Detailed particulars and registration forms may be obtained from the Friends' office by telephoning 9650 6398.



## WINDS OF CHANGE CRAFT EXHIBITION

The Plant Craft Cottage in the Gardens has been for many years the centre for plant crafts in Melbourne. In these beautiful surroundings, craftspeople use plant materials to make baskets, paper, natural dyes, pot-pourri, pressed plant cards and associated plant fibre crafts.

In 1996, to celebrate the 150th anniversary of the Gardens, Cottage members are mounting an exhibition 'Winds of Change'. This unusual and interesting exhibition will include decorative kites, windsocks, models of hot air balloons and other wind-borne craft.

The exhibition will be open daily until Sunday 31 March from 10.00am to 3.00pm. The Plant Craft Cottage, formerly H Gate Lodge, is close to the Botanic Gardens H Gate entrance on Alexandra Avenue. Visitors will be made very welcome and entry is free.

If you're interested in trying your hand at any of these plant crafts, phone the Cottage (9650 3235) for information about their 1996 one-and-two-day weekend workshops.

## SPECIAL BENEFITS TO FRIENDS

Remember that your Friends' membership entitles you to some worthwhile discounts.

The Friends' shop adjoining the Gardens' Tea Rooms and the Gardens' Shop in the Herbarium both offer a 10 per cent discount on purchases exceeding \$20.

The following businesses very kindly offer special discounts to Friends.

*Current membership cards must be shown in order for you to receive these discounts.*

### Fryers' Nursery

589 Glenferrie Rd, Hawthorn  
5% off plants only

### Idaho Nurseries

410 Waverley Rd, E. Malvern  
10% off plants only

### The Gardener's Bulleen Nursery

105 Bridge St, Bulleen  
5% off seedlings  
10% off potted plants

### Town and Country Gardens

1280 Malvern Rd, Malvern  
10% off everything

### The Arts Bookshop

1067 High St, Armadale

### Holmesglen College of TAFE

inc. the Victorian Schools Nursery  
585 Waverley Rd, Glen Waverley  
10% off everything

### The Gardeners Corner Store

190-192 New St, Brighton  
10% off everything

### Collectors Corner

Springvale Rd, Keysborough  
10% off all plants

### Kew Nursery

Cnr High & Gladstone Sts, Kew  
10% off all plants

### Wolf Tools

675 Canterbury Rd, Surrey Hills  
10% discount

### Burwood Garden Patch

1418 Toorak Rd, Burwood  
10% discount

### Green Gables Nursery

1039 Whitehorse Rd, Box Hill  
(opposite Town Hall) 10% discount on all items except specials.  
Does not apply to Frequent Buyer cardholders

### \*\*Garden of Eden Nursery

33 Ferrars Street, Albert Park  
10% discount off everything

\*\* denotes newcomer to list





*Botanic News is produced quarterly for the Friends of the Royal Botanic Gardens, Melbourne Inc.*

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

**Patron:**  
His Excellency the  
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**President of the Council  
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## FROM THE GARDENS AND HERBARIUM

During the past two months major renovations have been carried out on the Ellis Stones Rockery beside the Lily Lake. Site conditions there, especially problems with drainage, have caused difficulties in recent years and handicapped our efforts to maintain the quality of the display. The rock-work has now been re-laid by Gordon Ford, who worked closely with Ellis Stones for many years in the design and construction of rockeries. In January the new beds were planted out with a blend of Australian and New Zealand species suited to the characteristics of the site. The Australian - New Zealand theme arises from the Rockery's location on the edge of the New Zealand collection and opposite the Australian Rainforest Walk.

The bust of Ferdinand Mueller has recently been re-erected in a new location - beside the path about 50 metres from F-Gate (opposite F-Gate Lodge). This site was chosen because it is close to the National Herbarium, which is Mueller's lasting legacy to the Royal Botanic Gardens and to botanical science in Australia. I believe it is important that the statue which commemorates the man and his achievements is close to the building housing so many of his plant specimens, books and memorabilia.

Plenty continues to happen at RBG Cranbourne. The dams for the four new lakes along Wylies Creek have been finished. The contractors have been particularly skilful in excavating the water-bodies without disturbing nearby bushland and grassland. The stop valves on the dams will be closed next month so that the autumn and winter rains will fill the lakes and create beautiful new views across the southern part of the Gardens. The lakes will be a key landscape feature of the Botanical Collection to be established there in the years ahead.

Work on the detailed design of the Australian Garden will take place over the next six months.

Taylor and Cullity Pty Ltd with Paul Thomson are continuing development of the exciting concepts for the 25-hectare garden contained in their 1995 Master Plan. We have also commissioned studies of the groundwater and earthworks for the new landforms and lakes in the garden. Plantings of local species around the perimeter of the garden are growing on vigorously, and we begin creating the Marsh Garden in March with funding from Melbourne Parks and Waterways.

Another focus of activity at Cranbourne is the construction of an expanded Nursery/Depot area. Plans for this are virtually complete. The service facilities will be concentrated on one site around the existing office, and for the first time Cranbourne staff will have appropriate propagation, nursery and storage facilities. Office accommodation will be extended by moving a demountable building no longer required at the Observatory site down to Cranbourne.

Several new staff have joined the RBG in the past few months. Carol Guthrie has joined Rod Dunstan in our Education Branch to share the teaching load for our thousands of enthusiastic school visitors. Carol is a teacher seconded by the Directorate of School Education. Sandra Beckwith was appointed Landscape Planner last December, and she is now working on the development of the Master Plan for RBG Melbourne. Michael McNabb will be Nursery Supervisor at South Yarra while Josie Vaganian is on maternity leave for 12 months. Tracie Laws has been promoted to the position of Assistant Director, Public Programs. And to complete the staff news, Julie Goodall recently took up her appointment as part-time Volunteers Co-ordinator. She will be working with RBG support groups and others to expand both the opportunities for voluntary assistance and the numbers of volunteers helping us.

**Philip Moors**  
Director