



Botanic News

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FRIENDS OF THE ROYAL BOTANIC GARDENS, MELBOURNE INC.

AUTUMN 2002

A MAGIC PLACE

The Ian Potter Foundation Children's Garden is certainly one of the most innovative and inspiring new developments at the Royal Botanic Gardens Melbourne. After much anticipation, 8 February 2002 marked an exciting stage for this project when the Minister for Environment and Conservation, the Hon. Sherryl Garbutt MP and The Ian Potter Foundation Governors unveiled the landscape designs.

Despite the presence of distinguished donors and other important figures, a group of children from Toolangi and St Joseph's Primary Schools stole the limelight at the launch. For the past nine months, they've been inspiring partners with the RBG design team and 'guinea pigs' to test ideas. The garden will transform a site of about 5000 square metres fronting Birdwood Avenue between Observatory House and the Herbarium.

First and foremost it's to be a **garden** — not a playground — although interactive play, fun and enjoyment will be the means of firing young imaginations and engendering a passion for plants. Environmental education will be the underlying intent.

Lavender labyrinths, a secret ruin garden and a hidden gorge filled with cascading plants in a mist-filled micro-climate are just some of the amazing variety of weird and wonderful plants and displays to be featured in the garden. It will be accessible for wheelchairs and prams.

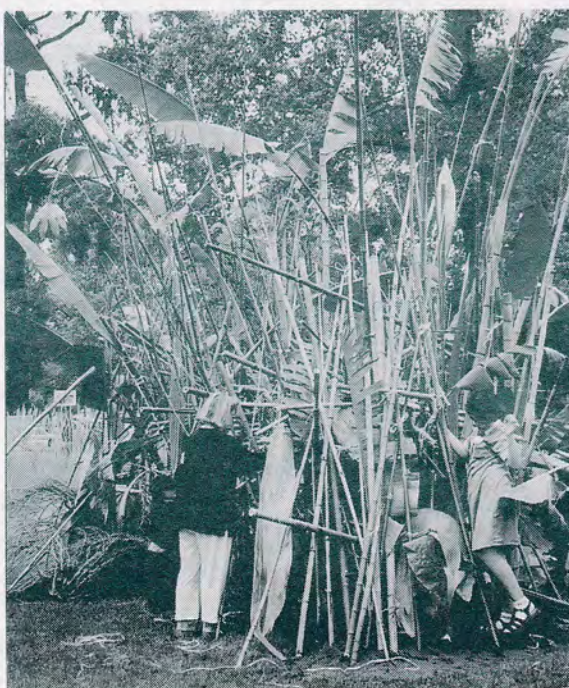


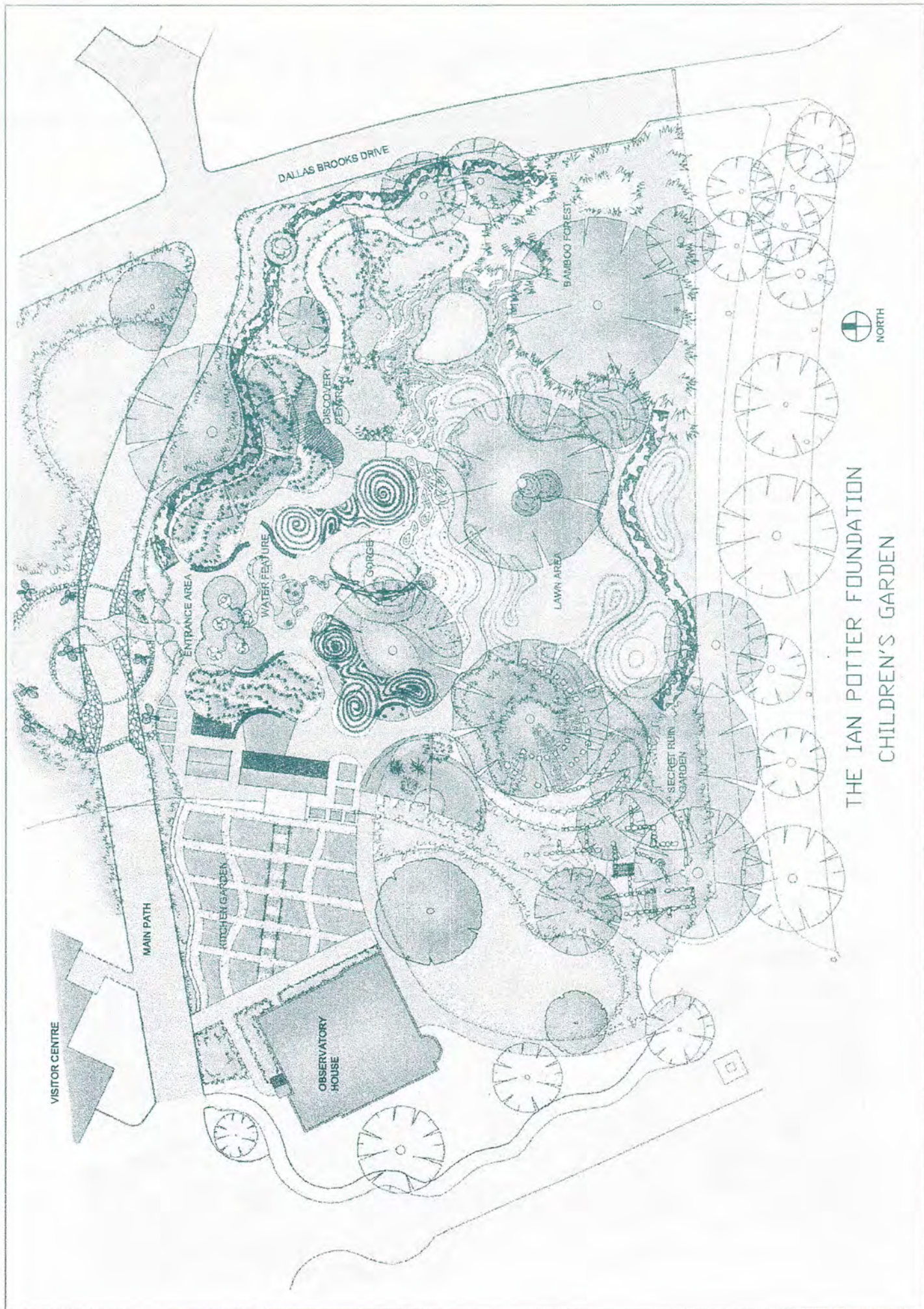
Children used plant material to build this freeform construction at the launch.
Photos by Janet Thomson

The first children's garden in an Australian botanic garden, it also sets a new direction internationally. It will be fashioned from natural materials, chosen for their form, texture, colour and, sometimes, weirdness. Instead of brightly painted climbing frames, there'll be a tree house, and tunnels (with peepholes) covered inside and out with plants. The aerial roots of the walking fig will provide hiding spaces, while wetlands will allow children to investigate life beneath the water.

All these things are geared to intrigue children and teach them the importance of the natural environment and the part that plants play in it.

The vision and innovation of the design is a tribute to the expertise and dedication of the staff involved in the project: Richard Barley, Andrew Laidlaw, Christine Joy, Izabella Meraviglia-Crivelli and Roslyn Semler, together with Annette Warner, David Wong and an expert external reference panel. The Ian Potter Foundation Children's Garden is due to be completed in 2004 and is sure to inspire and succeed in its quest to foster a unique relationship between children and the environment by encouraging them to explore and discover the amazing world of plants and their importance in our lives.





THE IAN POTTER FOUNDATION
CHILDREN'S GARDEN

FROM THE PRESIDENT

Through our membership of the Friends, we strengthen the bonds between those in the community who love and enjoy the Gardens and those entrusted by Government with their care and management.

This month we'll celebrate the 20th anniversary of the Friends, which grew from modest origins — a steering committee formed at a meeting of 10 people. From this small beginning the Friends has grown to the present substantial organisation. Almost immediately after the group's formation the Friends were thrust into an active role, lobbying for the Save the Lake campaign. Later, they were catalysts in prompting the administrative change which set up the RBG Board in 1991; until then the Gardens had been only a branch of a Government department.

To date the Friends have been able to donate no less than \$1,112,112 to the Gardens for specific projects. Equally importantly, they have contributed many thousands of hours of voluntary service and provided community support for, and input to, management.

We aim also to fill the very important role of keeping people informed about developments in the Gardens and the achievements of its Herbarium scientists; in addition we can offer behind-the-scenes opportunities and interaction for our Members with staff of the Royal Botanic Gardens. The RBG Director is now an ex-officio member of our Council and regularly attends Council meetings.

Seven of those who attended the original meeting of the Friends are still Members and Beth Higgs, the first President, will, at our birthday party on 14 March, recall some of the dramas of the early years. We'll look back over the 20 years of growth and achievement, and reaffirm our commitment to the Gardens. I hope long-standing Friends will come along to share the glory, and new Members to learn about our early history.

And think about giving the Friends a birthday present—join up a new Member!

Ninian Stephen

Autumn Activities

Celebrating 20 Years of Support for the Gardens

*Join the Friends' 20th Birthday celebrations on
Thursday 14 March 2002*

*The celebrations will start at 4.30pm
on the Hopetoun Lawn
where our founding President, Beth Higgs and
our current President, Sir Ninian Stephen,
will plant a commemorative tree.*

*We will then move on to the Mueller Hall for
our 20th Birthday Party at 5.30pm.*

*Cost: \$12.00 (Members' Guests welcome)
RSVP by 12 March on booking form*

THE ARTS AND CRAFTS GARDENS IN MELBOURNE 1900-1930

Illustrated talk by Prof. Harriet Edquist
Thursday 21 March at 5.30pm for 6.00pm
Mueller Hall, National Herbarium

Prof. Edquist will reveal an exciting insight into gardens designed by Arts and Crafts architects such as Walter Butler, and their impact on the development of Edna Walling.

Head of the School of Architecture and Design at RMIT University, she has published widely in Australian architectural history and has recently completed a monograph on the architect Harold Desbrowe-Anneer.

Her interest and research into garden history began with the discovery that Desbrowe-Anneer had designed over a dozen gardens around Melbourne between 1910 and 1932. This period, which preceded the emergence of landscape architecture as a profession, was marked by the work of architects in designing both house and garden in sympathy with one another. Notable examples were Walter Butler's *Marathon* at Mt Eliza (for the Grimwades) and the Sidney Myer property *Cranlana* at Toorak designed by Desbrowe-Anneer.

Prof. Edquist is now working on a book of Australian Arts and Crafts architecture and gardens.

Refreshments will be served prior to the talk.
Cost: \$16 Friends: \$11
RSVP by Tuesday 19 March on booking form

DROUGHT RESISTANT GARDENS

Illustrated talk by Attila Kapitany
Wednesday 3 April, 10.30am for 11.00am
Mueller Hall, National Herbarium

'Be entertained. Enjoy the passion, the eccentricity and the public speaking talents that I believe Attila displays so well.' Barry Fraser of Chisholm Institute says this of Attila Kapitany. And Jane Edmanson: '....Attila has a large amount of experience and standing within the horticulture industry, where people know him to excel in his field'.

Attila has travelled to the deserts and remote environs of the USA, Mexico, Brazil, Argentina and Chile to research a wide range of plants. He has gathered wide experience over 25 years with rare and unusual plants, and has appeared on *Gardening Australia*, *Burke's Backyard* and *Totally Wild*.

He will also have plants and his publications for sale. An accomplished botanical photographer and author,

Attila will talk to us about drought resistant gardens, their cultivation and care, demonstrating handling, propagation and potting along the way.

Morning tea/coffee will be served from 10.30 am
Cost: \$16 Friends: \$11
RSVP by Thursday 28 March on booking form

A SUMMER ADVENTURE AMIDST ANTARCTIC WILDLIFE

Illustrated talk by Philip Moors
Wednesday 10 April at 5.30 for 6.00pm
Mueller Hall, National Herbarium

In summer, most holidaymakers head for the beach or visit the tropics, but not Philip Moors, the Director of the Royal Botanic Gardens, Melbourne. His holiday of choice is a sea voyage including ice, snow, cold weather and wildlife. In January, as Melbourne warmed up, Philip was sailing down the Beagle Channel en route to Antarctica.

For three weeks on board, the group visited the Falkland Islands, South Georgia and then sailed on to the South Orkney Islands, Elephant Island in the South Shetland Islands and the Antarctic Peninsula. Along the way they sighted hundreds of thousands of penguins, petrels, gulls, albatross and other seabirds. The sea life included many types of whales and seals. The scenery was spectacular, from the massive penguin colonies on South Georgia to glaciers and the towering mountains of the Antarctic Peninsula.

We are fortunate that Philip has agreed to share his adventures and slides with us, and it is with great pleasure that we present this talk. We expect large numbers to attend, so please book early to avoid disappointment.

Refreshments will be served from 5.30pm
Cost: \$16 Friends: \$11
RSVP by Friday 5 April on booking form

GROWING FRIENDS
AUTUMN PLANT SALE
SATURDAY 13 April, 10.00am to 4.00pm
SUNDAY 14 April, 10.00am to 3.00pm

Autumn Colours — Trees and Gardens in the North-East

Bus Trip. Tuesday 16 to Thursday 18 April

This three-day bus trip to Bright and the beautiful Ovens and Kiewa Valleys has been planned to catch the autumn peak, and we will be visiting gardens

where the emphasis is on form and colour. Going directly to Bright, we will arrive in time for lunch at the Riverdeck Café overlooking the Ovens River, after which we'll visit three riverside gardens. *Merrimeet* has an acre of magnificent English garden, and *On the Banks of the Ovens* has established trees and shrubs with interestingly created 'garden rooms'. The third garden is in transition, being planted in a different style, with succulents and prostrate shrubs. There will be time to enjoy the autumn colours and beautifully planted town of Bright before dinner.

The next day features a drive further up the Ovens Valley to Harrietville to visit an old-established garden, also on the Ovens River, where morning tea will be available. Then we'll traverse the spectacular Tawonga Gap and enter the wonderful native forest and fern gullies of the upper Kiewa Valley on the way to Bogong. Bogong Village was planted by the then SEC during and after the construction of the Kiewa Valley Hydroelectric Scheme, and has been beautifully maintained since then. After lunch at Bogong Jack's we'll stop at the Clover Arboretum, the result of the enthusiasm of Clover Power Station construction workers, who designed and built this garden and planted trees from their native countries. A Friends' group commenced restoration work on the Arboretum in 1998. We'll dine in one of the many excellent restaurants in Bright.

The final morning will be spent around Yackandandah, where we will visit two more gardens: *Omaru* is a 22 year-old garden of 3.5 acres of mixed Australian and exotic plantings with emphasis on conifers, deciduous trees and dry stone walls. *The Diggings*, over 3 acres, holds the OPCA Collection of Liquidambar, as well as some unusual maples. It also has a number of species rhododendrons, including many collected from the wild. After lunch, a stop will be made on the way home at the 'Out of Town Nursery and Garden', where you may find an unusual plant or one of the many species of trees enjoyed on the trip.

Our group will meet in St Kilda Road outside the Victorian Arts Centre (the Theatres building), **ready for the bus departure at 9.00am sharp**. We will return about 6.00pm on Thursday to the same place.

Cost: \$450 per person (incl. GST) share; \$480 per person (incl. GST) single room. This covers coach travel (with seat belts), two nights' motel accommodation and continental breakfasts, lunch on all three days, morning tea and dinner on two days, and all entry fees. **As accommodation in Bright at this time of the year is very hard to find (or hold), it is important that you make your booking with us as early as possible, and no later than Monday 18 March.**



A Morning with French Roses Talk and Floral Demonstration Wednesday 24 April at 10.00am for 10.30am Mueller Hall, National Herbarium

The Friends are delighted to present a very special French morning. Delbard of France are internationally revered and respected as passionate creators of exotically perfumed roses that are out of the ordinary. When Melbourne couple Rod and Jennie Kerley saw these flowers in France, it was love at first sight, and they decided to extend to roses their business marketing new fruit and vegetable varieties. They visited the Delbard headquarters — a 13th century chateau set in 600 hectares of rolling countryside — to obtain the Australian rights to the entire collection. Now being grown in Australia, this includes 16 cut-rose types and 30 outdoor roses. The roses are introduced in their own 'Stories', including 'The Painters Roses', 'Grand Parfums', 'Souvenirs of Love', and 'Rosiers Bordures'. Rod Kerley will speak to us about introducing these wonderful roses to Australia, and about the roses themselves.

Chloe Fournier, a young French florist living in Melbourne at present, will add an extra Gallic touch. She has worked with various florists in Paris (including Erick Fabre, George Francois, Christian Fortu and Hermes), and will demonstrate a number of ways to arrange these glorious roses to display their special characteristics.

This function promises to be a wonderful event, starting with a French-inspired morning tea followed by the talk and demonstration. Please book early to avoid disappointment.

Du café, du thé et des gâteaux à dix heures
Cost: \$20 Friends \$15
RSVP by Wednesday 17 April on booking form

AUTUMN INSIDERS' QUARTERLY WALK *Berries, Fruits and Botany* **Thursday 2 May at 10.00am**

Meet at Gate Lodge, headquarters of the Friends, in Birdwood Avenue opposite the Shrine. Join a group of Friends to have a delicious morning tea, served by our catering group, in our landscaped garden. You will be delighted to see how the garden has taken shape with a summer of growth.

We will then head off for a walk in the Gardens, relishing the delights of Autumn from berries, fruits and rosehips to leaves of gold and scarlet. Do you know that we have figs, a native raspberry and a mulberry tree growing in the RBG? In particular our guide, Tom Neales, will concentrate on the botany of Autumn and why the plants behave as they do. Please book early as this walk will be restricted in numbers.

Cost: \$9 Friends \$7
RSVP by Friday 26 April on booking form

WHAT DO OUR BOTANISTS DO? (No.2)

ILLUSTRATED TALKS BY TWO RBG BOTANISTS
Tuesday 14 May at 10.00am for 10.30am
Mueller Hall, National Herbarium

The interest in our first talks in this series encouraged its continuation.

Tom May (Senior Mycologist) will speak on the studies of biodiversity and building an inventory of larger Australian fungi. This nationally important scientific work is centred on our Herbarium's staff. Practical problems such as wheat rust and animal-fungi interactions depend on systematic knowledge in this area.

Rob Cross (Horticultural Botanist) will be introducing the Gardens' horticultural research program, including the important native orchid conservation work in which the Gardens' staff have been involved. There are more threatened species in the Orchidaceae than in any other flowering plant family in Australia, and the research being undertaken will contribute to the consolidation of remaining populations of these attractive, but rare, plants.

As we saw from the first talks in this series, these very knowledgeable Herbarium scientists are lively presenters, well able to explain their work to a lay audience. We aim for a good balance of talk, slides and discussion.

Refreshments will be served from 10.00am
Cost: \$16 Friends \$11
RSVP by Friday 10 May on booking form

Autumn Video Show and Sale

The Chelsea Flower Show 2001
Rosemary Verey and Barnsley House Garden
Thursday 23 May at 10.00am for 10.30am
Mueller Hall, National Herbarium

Every May the grounds of The Royal Hospital at Chelsea are home to a superb event for which designers vie to create spectacular show gardens, full of ideas from a landmark 'folly' to a garden office. This video, hosted by Roy Lancaster, marvels at the plants on display, and follows preparations that build to the Press Day, when judges make their decisions, celebrities launch new plants and the Royal Family pays its annual visit.

The garden of Barnsley House, Gloucestershire, is one of the best-known and finest examples of an English country garden. Its potager, herb and knot gardens, and laburnum walk are much photographed. Yet it remains an essentially personal expression of the ideas and interests of its creators, the late Rosemary Verey and her husband David. The video leads us through the different features of the garden at every season — the result of nearly half a century of painstaking dedication.

Copies of these videos will be for sale at the function. As well, you may order from the complete catalogue of videos available through Michael Pitkin of Viburnum Gardens. The Friends' funds will benefit from these sales. (These video shows have been a popular feature for the Friends of RBG Sydney for several years.)

Morning tea/coffee will be served at 10.00am and there will be a short break between the two videos.

Cost: \$16 Friends \$11
RSVP Monday 20 May on enclosed booking form

NEW MEMBERS WELCOME **Tuesday 26 March at 5.30pm** **Mueller Hall, National Herbarium**

New Members who have joined the Friends during the past six months will receive invitations to this function in Mueller Hall. We look forward to meeting you and welcoming you to the Friends. After a glass of wine and savouries, we will present a short information slide show, a welcome by the Director of the Gardens, and brief talks by our committee leaders. Voluntary Guides will lead a twilight walk through the Gardens to wind up the evening.

If you have been unable to attend a previous New Members Welcome, please contact the Friends' office on 9650 6398 for an invitation. We would be delighted to have your company.

GROWING FRIENDS AUTUMN SALE

Saturday 13 April, 10.00am-4.00pm, Sunday 14 April, 10.00am-3.00pm

Entry from E Gate in Birdwood Avenue

Work goes on in the Nursery regardless of the holiday season. In fact this is a particularly busy time as the plants are growing fast!

This year the Autumn Sale will be held in April instead of March. We had to avoid Easter and also sought to avoid the celebration of Greek Independence Day at the Shrine, which in previous years has contributed to traffic congestion and parking difficulties.

Extra help from Members not involved with the Growing Friends on a weekly basis is always most welcome at the sale. Areas of need are at the checkout, selling raffle tickets, and assistance with the catering for those working fulltime on both days. Please phone the office on 9650 6398 if you could spare a couple of hours to assist.

To allow a reasonable interval between the Autumn and the Spring Sales, we have moved the Spring Sale to Saturday 19 and Sunday 20 October.

Because of the Autumn Sale, the Nursery will be closed to Members on Fridays 29 March and 5, 12 and 19 April. However, as a privilege of membership, Friends (only) may make purchases on Friday mornings between 10.00am and 1.00pm at our Nursery on our regular working days. Enter E Gate, Birdwood Ave, and turn left.



The new propagation facilities in the RBG Works Yard will be officially commissioned in March. There's a state-of-the-art propagation glasshouse, where Dermot Molloy is shown setting up pots on the new rolltop benches, and an adjoining building with a preparation room and office. The Friends' Trust Fund donated \$200,000 (most of it from the Helen Johns bequest) for the facilities. Cuttings posted by our Growing Friends can be raised in this new glasshouse.
Photo by Christine Harris

We have many delightful plants for sale now.

Among these are some attractive succulents such as *Kalanchoe longiflora* — large grey leaves with pink scalloped edging; *Sedum nussbaumerinum* — fleshy golden rosettes edged with deep orange; *Crassula coralina* — small fleshy leaves tipped red; *Ajugas* — silver, bronze or dark green; *Mandevilla suaveolens* — an attractive climber; *Callicarpa japonica* *Leucocarpa* — a shrub, and *Cyrilla racemiflora* — a tree, both having white flowers; *Primula florindae* — clusters of lemon-yellow flowers on tall stalks.

Native plants include *Viminaria juncea*, a weeping shrub, and *Myoparum parvifolium*, a groundcover with fragrant flowers. When you visit, check whether the two varieties of the striking bulb *Arisaema* are still in leaf.

At Christmas one of our longest serving members retired. Ruth Funder has given us the benefit of her wide knowledge of rhododendrons for many years, as well as bringing in plants and cuttings. Many people will remember the beautiful flowers Ruth displayed at the sales. She has promised to visit us from time to time and may come to help at sales. We will miss her good humour and quiet work.

Joan Hardy, Convener

HELP THE GARDENS GROW

Is there a particular tree in the Gardens that holds special significance for you? Or a favourite group of plants such as the Camellia Collection or the Perennial Border?

The RBG has launched a sponsorship program to encourage donors' personal identification with something growing in the Gardens, and to raise awareness of the need for public support. It's like giving a financial hug to a tree!

Three levels of annual sponsorship (\$30, \$75, \$125) have been suggested, with related benefits. The scheme will not result in the positioning of donors' plaques in the Gardens. The generosity of supporters will be acknowledged by, for instance, an opportunity to meet Gardens' curators, have guided walks, and receive updates on the sponsored tree or collection. Phone 9252 2303 for more information.

Footnote: *Agathis robusta*, the giant Queensland Kauri on the Australian Rainforest Walk, is rumoured to be the most 'hugely hugged' tree in the Gardens.

Botanical Illustrators

BOTANICAL ILLUSTRATORS SEASONAL PROGRAM

**Southern Chinese Garden with Terry Smyth
Tuesday 19 March.**

**Meet at the Whirling Room at 10.00am
Cost: \$5.50 (incl. GST). Pay on the day, but
RSVP to Friends' office, tel. 9650 6398.
Numbers limited to 20, so please book early.**

At 10.30am, after morning tea, Terry will walk with us to the Southern Chinese Garden near Alexandra Avenue and talk about the plants. She has collected many of the specimens in China, and will point out some of the significant plants already suggested for us to illustrate for the proposed Friends' *Illustrated Garden* collection.

Great Success for a New Venture

A display and sale of small unframed works of art and cards by the Botanical Illustrators was held in the Baracchi Room on 27 November. It was a great success with more than 30 artists participating, and a steady stream of eager purchasers. The artists were delighted to sell so many paintings, while the Friends' commission — amounting to \$2750 after all expenses were deducted — boosts our support for the Gardens. We hope to conduct a similar sale in the future.

CHRISTMAS CARDS. The sale of our special Christmas card, reproducing a botanical illustration of *Hakea laurina* by Dianne Emery, was very successful. We sold about 1300 cards and hope to repeat the idea next Christmas.

WHIRLYBIRDS. The Tuesday Painters have resumed their weekly meetings in the Whirling Room Studio, and invite Botanical Illustrator Friends to join them to work in an informal group and share ideas and technical information in a supportive atmosphere. Ring Rita Parkinson on 9821 5883 for information.

Town and Country Botanical Illustration Exhibition

More than 20 RBG Botanical Illustrators were invited to exhibit up to four paintings each at the Benalla Regional Gallery in November in conjunction with the Rose Festival. Dame Elisabeth Murdoch officially opened the exhibition and many favourable comments were received on the quality and variety of work. The Gallery intends to make this a biennial affair.

DIANNE EMERY'S CLASSES

Dianne's classes for Term 2 will commence in the week beginning 22 April. Please contact her on 9523 5397 for details.

MICROSCOPE AND PLANT DISSECTION ILLUSTRATION WORKSHOP with Mali Moir

A series of six weekly sessions, each of four hours, will run in Term 2 from 15 April to 20 May, beginning Monday 15 April at 10.00am. It is suitable for both beginners and more advanced artists. Basic botany and plant dissection for illustration will be covered. Teaching in pen and ink, graphite pencil and watercolour medium — your choice. A list of materials needed is available through Dianne Emery. Please contact her for more details on 9523 5397. Cost (incl. GST): \$240 Friends \$220

BOTANICAL ART TOUR OF USA

An earlier *Botanic News* noted the USA tour for artists being organised by Jenny Phillips, and the RBG Botanical Illustrators invited to exhibit at the International Exhibition of Botanical Art and Illustration at the Hunt Institute, Carnegie Mellon University, Pittsburgh in October. It was encouraging to observe that the standard of work by the eight Australian exhibitors, alongside those from 10 other countries, was the equal of anything in the show; several Australian works were acquired by the Hunt Institute for their permanent collection.

The next two weeks were spent visiting gardens, galleries and museums and enjoying the spectacular Fall colours. Of special note were the gardens of Dunbarton Oaks in Washington, a series of terraced 'rooms' enhanced by unique ornamentation. Winterthur and Longwood, both in Pennsylvania, were created by the Du Pont family and show the benefit of continuing financial support, as evidenced by Longwood's nine acres of magnificent glasshouses. Bartram's Garden, in Philadelphia, the oldest surviving botanical garden in North America, is noted for its historic and rare plantings.

A museum highlight for me was the astounding collection of Glass Flowers at Harvard University, Boston, comprising 4000 exquisitely crafted models created over 50 years.

The entire trip was a most rewarding and inspirational experience, and I would encourage artists to submit work for selection in the 2004 Exhibition. Artists can only exhibit once, and who knows...perhaps there will be another tour!

Beverley Ednie

MALI MOIR

Mali Moir, one of the FRBG's Botanical Illustrators, finished 2001 on a high note with the award of a gold medal from the Royal Horticultural Society in London. Her suite of eight watercolours of Grevilleas, the result of two years' part-time work, was shown in the very selective winter exhibition in November.

In winning a gold medal Mali joins a small and distinguished band of artists, including Jenny Phillips and Anne O'Connor from Melbourne.

She exhibited another Grevillea painting, by invitation, at the prestigious Hunt Institute in Pittsburgh, USA in October.

In responding to a letter of congratulations from the Friends' president, Sir Ninian Stephen, Mali said 'It was exhilarating to receive the gold medal and I was proud to present our extraordinary Australian Grevilleas to English eyes. I was very proud to exhibit as an Australian artist.

'I must tell you that after travelling to America to be part of and see a collection of highly acclaimed international work and to also see the high standard of UK artists, I realise that Australian botanical artists are of an exceptionally high quality, keeping well in tune with world standards; they deserve this recognition in international circles. This is due to our wonderful teachers in Melbourne and the support of such organisations as the Friends of the Royal Botanic Gardens, Melbourne.'

Mali added that the inspiring standard of work and the quality presentation of the Friends' *The Art of Botanical Illustration* exhibitions should be celebrated. 'It is owed to the marvellous work of staff and volunteers' she added.

Mali works part-time as a botanical artist at the National Herbarium, and was a major contributor to the RBG's *Flora of Victoria*.

Stop Press: FRBG Botanical Illustrator Rita Parkinson has been awarded a gold medal at the most recent RHS exhibition in London.



Artocarpus heterophyllus.
Pencil drawing by Andrew Seward



Grevillea robusta by Mali Moir

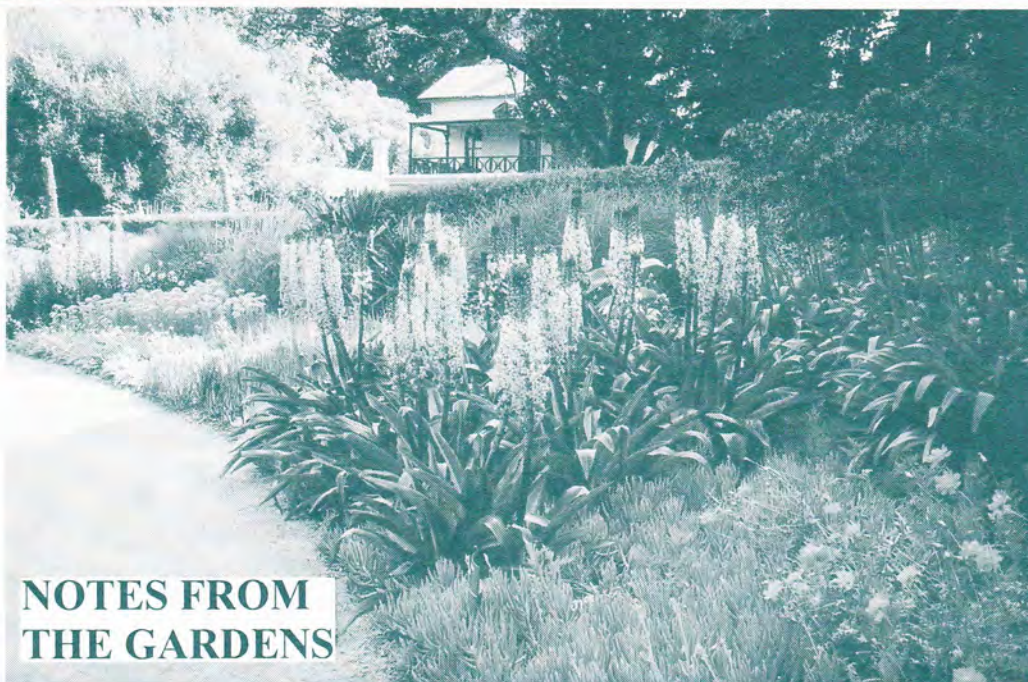
ANDREW SEWARD

A London studio for three months rent-free, and \$10,000 to cover expenses...that's the 2002 joy for Andrew Seward, another of the Friends' Botanical Illustrators. Andrew has received a grant from the Australia Council for the Arts, enabling him to live and work in Aldgate from April to June.

He is keen to research and see fine examples of botanical illustration — especially historical depiction of Australian flora and 'type' specimens that seldom travel to Australia — in such venerable institutions as the British Museum, the Victoria and Albert Museum and Kew Gardens. In official language, he will also 'undertake development of his visual art practice', which is likely to relate his background in contemporary art to these historic artistic treasures.

'I look forward to the thrill of a period devoted solely to research and daily studio activity. In the process I hope to discover a compost of natural forms in an old city, new for me, that will provide continuing inspiration and insight for my work at home', he said.

Andrew studied painting at RMIT, and now teaches in the Department of Art and Design at Monash University. His work is in collections at the National Gallery of Victoria and Monash University. He also organises artists' field trips to the Victorian Alps. He joined the Friends' Illustrators in 1997 and exhibited with them the following year. He has exhibited widely. A 1999 show at Spencer Street station (an exhibition space he set up 12 years ago) depicted weeds growing around urban train lines, and prompted people to take a fresh look at everyday things. It received a great deal of media attention.



NOTES FROM THE GARDENS

The Perennial Border at its brilliant best in this Indian summer, and (below) a thrusting cone on a cycad (Lepidozamia peroffskyana) on the Australian Rainforest Walk.

Photos by Duncan Ironmonger

The Gardens take on a distinct character during autumn, partly due to the changes in plant appearance, but more so because of the difference in intensity and angle of sunlight. As the peak of summer is past, the sun starts to slope off to the north little by little, and the light becomes less harsh. Some of the subtle hues and textures of plants start to be more noticeable during this time, in foliage, flowers and bark. It is a good time to break out the trusty old box-brownie to capture some of the moodiness of the landscape, and the richness of its detail.

Various groups of plants step forward for their moments of fame during this time. The lairish Lagerstroemias present their showy blooms, with *L. indica* in shades from deep cerise-pink to white. One which is well worth a visit is the single specimen of *L. subscostata* on the point of the lawn near the Southern Chinese Collection (near Gate H), though perhaps the following autumn-early winter foliage colour is more impressive.

Tree Dahlias are a treat for a while, with their tall stems adorned with pink or white flowers. Some good examples are in the triangle bed downhill from the Water Conservation Garden. Sensibly, these plants reach their greatest display during the calmest period of the year. If we happen to get a wild, windy day, they are cactus (well, not really).

Fruits start to appear on shrubs such as Viburnums, often in bright reds or oranges. A favourite is 'Notcutt's Variety', which is on the edge of the Combretum Bed, near the Rose Pavilion. Some substantially bigger fruits appear in the shape of cones on many conifers. Most impressive of these are the cones of the Bunya Bunya (*Araucaria bidwillii*),

which can reach about 300mm in height, and weigh up to five kilograms. Although not all the specimens in the Gardens form cones, those that do can provide some tense moments in terms of Keeping Our Visitors Safe. You will usually find that as soon as cones are noticed on a Bunya Bunya, the area in the 'drop zone' is roped off, to protect the unsuspecting visitors from these falling wonders. The barrier won't be removed until the 'all clear' is given, once all cones have fallen. The seeds in the cones are delicious when steamed or baked, with a slightly nutty potato-ish flavour.

The last word on autumn is, of course, deciduous trees and leaf colour and fall. The Oak Lawn is a procession of changing colours week by week, and the piles of leaves on the ground grow deeper and noisier. Fantastic!

Richard Barley



HIDDEN TREASURES BEHIND THE SCENES

Stefano de Pieri is ecstatic about it. Stephanie Alexander covets it. Ann and Pitzy Folk are its proud initiators and Observatory Café patrons reap its benefits. The kitchen garden flourishing behind the café is one of the RBG's hidden treasures.

It's brimming with vegetables, fruit trees and herbs: bay trees, espaliered figs, lemons, limes and grapefruit, lettuce, capsicum, red and white strawberries, rhubarb, scarlet runner and butter beans, gourds, artichokes, Welsh onions, sweet corn, tomatoes, oregano, dill, rocket, tarragon, rosemary and much more. They find their way to the kitchen, ensuring the freshest possible ingredients on the menu.



It's always said that preparation is the key to successful vegetable growing, and extensive preparation was certainly necessary on this site. The clay was impenetrable and had to be excavated to 450mm. More than 20 cubic metres of soil, sand and screening aggregate was placed in the garden. Much of the design related to hidden services underground. The deck is portable and can be lifted to reveal a large electrical pit and stormwater pit.

The RBG's landscape architect, Andrew Laidlaw, designed the garden and an RBG team — Laurie Zarafa, Cain Noble, Chris Morgan, Greg Lirosi and Geoff King — undertook the construction. Sculptor David Wong erected the trellis and teepees which provide decorative support for climbers.

Ann and Pitzy, lessees of the café, have financed the enterprise, and have a very enthusiastic gardener, Michael, who tends the garden once a week, as well as seeking out interesting seeds and rare varieties. He loves experimenting.

There's a table or two for café patrons, and the space has been used for parties and wine-tastings. You're welcome to walk around and admire it anytime you're visiting the Gardens.

A graceful grove of Bursaria spinosa, making rapid growth behind the Observatory Building, provides a link with some of the oldest vegetation on the Observatory site. Now, only one of the original Bursarias which were present before European settlement remains beside Birdwood Avenue.

Photo by Duncan Ironmonger



Chef Emma (left) picking purple basil, Pitzy, and one of the hens crafted by Ann's brother, Dougal Ramsay.

Photos by Christine Harris



Birds of the Gardens

The first known list of birds in the Gardens, recording 114 species, was prepared by Baron von Mueller around 1869. Fortunately many birders have recorded sightings over the decades; a study of these lists has provided an impressive total of 186 species of birds seen in the Gardens. These lists demonstrate how some species have appeared and disappeared, how populations have fluctuated, and how changes in the landscape have influenced the distribution of birds over the years. About 80 per cent are native birds.

Over the last 20 years for example, birds once seen daily, such as Tree Sparrows and Red-whiskered Bulbuls, are rarely found today. The situation is reversed with Kookaburras and Rainbow Lorikeets, which have become much more common.

The recent changes at Long Island have resulted in some interesting bird sightings. Little Grassbirds, not on a list for many years, now seem to have taken up residence. Royal Spoonbills, not recorded since von Mueller, have been seen on two occasions. Some interesting sightings in recent times include a pair of Tawny Frogmouths near E Gate, a juvenile Crimson Rosella and a Dollarbird.

This is the first of the Friends' Bird Notes which, with your support, will become a regular feature. Please contact Tony Delves (9820 0694), or David Plant (9857 6006) with any interesting sightings. About four years ago David compiled an RBG bird list as a Friends' project; this is available at the Visitor Centre.



PLEASE DON'T FEED THE WILDLIFE!

RBG Melbourne is a sanctuary for a variety of birds and other animals, and feeding them has been a popular activity, especially for children. However, feeding birds and other wildlife can be potentially harmful in a number of ways. Inappropriate food may cause dietary problems, leading to sickness or malnutrition. There is also the potential for birds becoming dependent on the artificial food source. This in itself may cause a number of further problems, including young birds not being taught how to forage for natural foods, possibly leading to starvation, and the interruption of natural migration patterns due to the presence of a constant food source.

Both RBG Melbourne and surrounding parklands provide an abundance of natural foods for wild birds. Following discussions with the Department of Natural Resources and Environment, the RSPCA and bird conservation organisations, we are now asking visitors not to feed or handle birds or other animals in the Gardens. We encourage visitors to enjoy the sights and sounds of the Royal Botanic Gardens' wildlife in other ways, such as by joining a *Brunch with the Birds* guided walk next Spring, or by exploring the Gardens with the information sheet available from the Visitor Centre; this details the birds commonly seen at the RBG.

Philip Moors



Gardens we enjoyed on our Yarra Valley trip in January included Marion Park at East Warburton (left) where our host Philippa Moore is shown with Geoff Crowhurst, and the Warburton property of Sue and Stan Slusarek (above).

Photos by Christine Harris and David Plant



Photographer Simon Griffiths and writer Sarah Guest gave us a wonderful talk about their book, *Gardens in Australia*, in November. They are with Friends Diana Lempriere and Linda Floyd, whose gardens were featured in the book. Photo by Cathy Trinca

NEW SHOOTS:

The Art of Plant Photography

Members responded keenly last year to our survey's suggestion of a course in plant photography. We want to proceed further, by calling for expressions of interest by Friday 22 March. This will allow us to consult with you about the most convenient time and the scope of the course.

We are considering a workshop, with professional direction, along the lines of the one we conducted in 1993. It might consist of about six sessions, with some field work, covering basics of lighting and techniques to capture the beauty and drama of plants. Our tentative plan would be to hold late afternoon sessions at fortnightly intervals during spring or summer; BYO materials and equipment.

Please leave your name, address and phone number at the Friends' office (9650 6398); we will develop the idea with your further input.

Plant Propagation Course

If you want to know how to raise your own plants from seed or take cuttings from favourite plants then this activity will be for you. The Friends are planning, in conjunction with the RBG staff, a plant propagation course to be held on one morning a week for four weeks. Look out for details in our Winter *Botanic News*.

No Show

After stunning RBG landscape displays in 1998 and 2000 at the International Flower and Garden Show, Friends may be eagerly anticipating another spectacular this year. However, the Gardens will not be taking part in 2002, its resources being focused on The Ian Potter Foundation Children's Garden and the Australian Garden.

A Friends' Publications Group

Heather Ironmonger, who has been our Editor for 10 years, has expressed her intention to retire, so we are keen to set up a group to take over responsibility for *Botanic News*. Our idea is to share the workload, and also to share the pleasure to be gained from this close association with the Friends and with Gardens staff.

A few Members have already indicated possible interest, and if there are any others with writing or editing experience who may be able to join in this important Friends' work we would like to hear from you.

Please contact the office on 9650 6398 and we'll return your call.

Janet Thomson
Vice-President

BOOKS WANTED NOW!

Do you have books, magazines, prints or scientific journals on plants, gardening, natural history, the environment and related topics that are no longer needed? If so, the Friends of RBG Cranbourne invite you to assist their project: the establishment of a reference library at the Cranbourne Gardens. A recent bequest to Cranbourne forms the nucleus of a library, and further excellent donations have been made.

RBG staff will select from among the donations the publications suitable for the Cranbourne collection (or even for RBG Melbourne's library). Duplicate publications and others of a more popular nature not required for the library, but appealing to home gardeners, will be offered at Bookfest 2002 in Mueller Hall on 19 and 20 October. The proceeds of Bookfest 2002 will be used to purchase additional publications and equipment for the library at Cranbourne.

If you have books you would like to donate to Bookfest 2002, or need further information, please phone (03) 9879 1427. Please make a note of Bookfest 2002 in your diary and come along to Mueller Hall. You will be able to visit the Growing Friends' Spring Plant Sale on the same weekend.

THE JOHNSTON COLLECTION

Our Christmas tour of the Johnston Collection in East Melbourne was of particular interest for us, being botanical in theme. We will arrange another tour for mid-to-late November 2002, when the Christmas décor is in place; we apologise that we could not meet the demand for places last December.

A blackwood, Acacia melanoxylon, was planted on Central Lawn on 5 December in recognition of the support given to the RBG by its many volunteers. The Friends' Lawrence Cohn took part.
Photo by Sharon Willoughby

ASSOCIATION OF FRIENDS OF BOTANIC GARDENS

The date has been set for the next conference of the Association, which now links Friends' groups across Australia. It will take place on 2 and 3 November, centred on Ballarat but also involving Buninyong, Daylesford and Castlemaine Botanic Gardens.

Cranbourne Winter Lecture Series

Friends of RBG Cranbourne will hold another Winter lecture series this year, beginning on Sunday 16 June, with talks about fungi and Victorian alpine wildflowers. Look out for details of this event, and further lectures in mid-July and mid-August, in the next edition of *Botanic News*.

Mrs Dorothy Jessep

With the death of Mrs Dorothy Jessep on 8 February, in her 108th year, the Gardens lost a very long link with their past. Her husband Alex was Director of the Gardens from 1941 until his retirement in 1957 and died in 1991, a few days short of his 99th birthday. Mrs Jessep was far from impressed with the Director's residence (Gardens House), declaring it 'very crude inside', but made it presentable. At the time of her 100th birthday she recalled her time in the Director's Residence as the happiest period of her life.

At first, during wartime, there were severe staff shortages in the Gardens, the Herbarium building was commandeered by the US forces, and pressure for air raid shelters to be dug in the Gardens had to be countered.

In happier post-war years, the Jesseps enjoyed quite a close relationship with the occupants of Government House. Mr Jessep was an internationally-recognised camellia expert and planted many specimens in the Gardens — there are varieties named after both Alex and Dorothy. He was a founder of the Australian Camellia Research Society, and Mrs Jessep succeeded him as patron — a position she held at the time of her death. They were also associated with the Rose Society.

Always keenly interested in the Gardens and their staff, Mrs Jessep continued to visit until she suffered a stroke at the age of 105; happily it did not affect her cheery manner and exceptional memory. (It is noteworthy that she is survived by sisters aged 104 and 100, and a 96-year-old brother.)



PLANT CRAFT COTTAGE

It could be said that the Friends of the RBG was propagated by the Plant Craft Cottage, the volunteer group that celebrated its 20th birthday last year.

Apart from the special workshops and holiday programs listed in the *Special Events in the RBG* page, the various craft groups welcome 'observers' at their regular Tuesday activities (10.30-2.00). From plant fibres and dried flowers, they make paper, baskets, natural dyes, pot pourri and cards. They also maintain the heritage-listed building and its delightful cottage garden.

Telephone 9650 3235 for the schedule if you're interested in a particular craft. The Cottage is near H Gate, with 4-hour parking on Alexandra Avenue.

Olive Pink Botanic Garden Alice Springs

Anna Denton writes: During the Christmas holidays I had the great pleasure of visiting this botanic garden and being welcomed by the curator, Mr Clarry Smith. I recommend it to you.

It is an arid zone botanic garden with well-labelled group plantings in defined areas, and accompanying notes to aid easy identification.

In 1996 the garden was named Olive Pink Botanic Garden after its founder, an anthropologist. The Visitor Centre has a display about her, with notes, sketches and a selection of books; it gives evidence of the difficult and colourful life of this extraordinary woman.

Footnote: We have newsletters from the Friends of this garden in the office which may be of interest to prospective visitors.

The Friends Christmas Party at Gardens House



Mrs Caroline Cousins, Director of Music at Melbourne Girls Grammar School, with some of the singers who entertained us with carols.

Below (from left): Louise Coronel, Cathy Trinca, Susama Mason and Pamela Shaw

Photos by Duncan Ironmonger

Raffle Prizes

The Friends acknowledge with thanks the following supporters who donated prizes for our Christmas raffle which raised \$383: Bacs Restaurant; Domain Books; Domain Flowers; Petal Pushers; Palace Cinemas; The RBG Shop; Garden of Eden Nursery; The Avenue Bookshop; Bloomings Books; The Growing Friends; Friends of the Royal Botanic Gardens

MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

If you're seeing this newsletter for the first time and would like to join the Friends, here is some basic information.

Annual membership fees are:

Household	\$47
Individual	\$33
(Country, Interstate, Overseas	\$24
(Full-time Student or Pensioner	\$24
(validation required)	

OR phone the Friends' office, 03 9650 6398, for an application form. (It also has details of Corporate, Group and Life membership.)

OR visit our website: www.frbgmelb.org.au

Please make cheques or money orders payable to Friends of RBG Melbourne.

If paying by credit card, state card number, expiry date and name on card.

Post to: Friends of RBG Melbourne
Gate Lodge, 100 Birdwood Avenue
Melbourne Vic 3004



Floreo

The next edition of the RBG's *Floreo* is expected to be available in late March. You may collect copies from Gate Lodge or at Friends' functions. *Floreo* will not be mailed out to Members this time.

The RBG's Policy for the Conservation of Plant Biodiversity

The RBG's commitment to the conservation of biodiversity has been further reinforced with the development of a Code of Practice by the working group to ensure that all works undertaken by the RBG, and its contractors, comply with the principles of Ecologically Sustainable Development (ESD). ESD translates as development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

These principles will be implemented across the organisation in the coming months to ensure that all RBG activities effectively integrate both long- and short-term economic, environmental, social and equity considerations. One of the first applications of the Code of Practice will be the development of the Australian Garden Visitor Centre.

Philip Moors

THREATENED SPECIES BED

Plans are underway for the development of a garden displaying threatened species, with a strong emphasis on interpretation. Victorian plants will be featured, with a limited number of others from south-eastern Australia, and possibly a few from overseas. Its aim is to inform people about how plants become rare or endangered, and how the public can assist in their conservation.

There will also be examples from the RBG's participation in recovery programs for threatened plants: current efforts are concentrating on the Grampians pincushion lily, *Borya mirabilis*, which is critically endangered. Although this species is slow-growing and hard to propagate, the RBG hopes to re-establish it in the wild eventually.

A team of six, combining staff from the Herbarium, Gardens and Public Programs, is working towards the design, funding, plant acquisition and interpretation for the Threatened Species Bed. They hope to make a start on the garden next Spring. It will replace the bulb bed on Central Lawn.

Victoria's Plants First Revealed: Robert Brown in Port Phillip 1802. A symposium (18 April 2002) to celebrate Victoria's first botanist

The School of Botany at The University of Melbourne and the Royal Botanic Gardens, Melbourne are hosting an afternoon symposium and keynote lecture to celebrate the bicentenary of Robert Brown's historic visits to the shores of Port Phillip Bay. Brown has been described as the greatest collector of

Australian plants. During his three-and-a-half years of travel around the coast of Australia (December 1801-May 1805) he collected some 3400 plant species. Brown arrived at Port Phillip on the *Investigator* captained by Matthew Flinders. On that occasion, Brown came ashore for one week, ascended Arthurs Seat, studied the heathlands of Mornington Peninsula and visited Swan Bay (J. Willis *Muelleria* Vol. 1 1955). He later spent a second week in the area around Sorrento.

Our symposium will be held in the KPMG Conference Room, 161 Collins Street, Melbourne. Speakers will include Professor David Mabberley, Helen Hewson, Winty Calder, Mark McDonnell and Frank Udovicic. Laureate Professor Adrienne Clarke from the School of Botany and Dr Philip Moors, Director of the RBG, will introduce the program. Talks will cover Robert Brown the man and his history, Brown's artist Ferdinand Bauer, the significance of Brown's collections and his contribution to botany, and past and present glimpses of the vegetation of the Mornington Peninsula and the Melbourne urban area.

Registration will cost \$35 for the full program, \$20 for students and \$15 for the keynote lecture only (6.15pm), including refreshments. A brochure will be available soon, but if you would like to register an expression of interest or obtain further information, email Karen.Lockyer@rbg.vic.gov.au

Marco Duretto, Manager, Plant Sciences, RBG

* * * * *

In an article in the Friends of the Botanic Gardens of Adelaide *Gazette*, Rip van Velsen notes, 'In 1814 Brown published his scientific descriptions of Australian plants in the appendix to Matthew Flinders' *A Voyage to Terra Australis*. He described, in Latin (the universal scientific language for describing plant and animal species) over 207 Australian plant genera which are still recognised internationally today. The plant description required the following parts to be described in Latin—tree form, foliage, leaves, petiole, inflorescence, bracts, flower, calyx, petals, stamen, filament, anther, pollen, disc, ovary, stigma, style, fruit, placentation, septa, seed, seed coat, cotyledons, embryo and germination features.

Gardeners, bushwalkers and many plant lovers would readily recognise the following plant names—*Callistemon*, *Dryandra*, *Nuytsia*, *Telopea* (Waratah) and *Vanda* (orchid genus,) five of the 207 genera established by Brown.

Brown demonstrated his respect for Matthew Flinders by naming the genus *Flindersia* in his honour. A specimen of *Flindersia australis* is growing in the Queensland bed on the RBG's Eastern Lawn.

AUTUMN 2002 BOTANIC NEWS
BOOKING FORM

FRIENDS 20TH BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS

No..... @ \$12 **TOTAL:\$** _____
Names of persons attending:
.....
.....
RSVP by 12/3/02

ARTS AND CRAFTS GARDENS IN MELBOURNE

No..... of Friends @ \$11
No..... of Others @ \$16 **TOTAL:\$** _____
Names of persons attending:
.....
.....
RSVP by 19/3/02

DROUGHT RESISTANT GARDENS

No..... of Friends @ \$11
No..... of Others @ \$16 **TOTAL:\$** _____
Names of persons attending:
.....
.....
RSVP by 28/3/02

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

Please return the relevant section of this form with remittance and stamped self-addressed envelope to: Friends of Royal Botanic Gardens, Gate Lodge, 100 Birdwood Avenue, Melbourne 3004. Telephone: (03) 9650 6398

Cheques/postal orders payable to: Friends of Royal Botanic Gardens

NAME _____
ADDRESS _____

AUTUMN 2002 BOTANIC NEWS
BOOKING FORM

A SUMMER ADVENTURE AMIDST ANTARCTIC WILDLIFE

No..... of Friends @ \$11
No..... of Others @ \$16 **TOTAL:\$** _____
Names of persons attending:
.....
.....
RSVP by 5/4/02

BUS TRIP TO BRIGHT & NORTH-EAST

No..... @ \$450 (share)
No..... @ \$480 (single) **TOTAL:\$** _____
Names of persons:
.....
.....
RSVP by 18/3/02

A MORNING WITH FRENCH ROSES

No..... of Friends @ \$15
No..... of Others @ \$20 **TOTAL:\$** _____
Names of Persons:
.....
.....
RSVP by 17/4/02

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

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AUTUMN 2002 BOTANIC NEWS
BOOKING FORM

AUTUMN INSIDERS' WALK: Berries, Fruits & Botany
No..... of Friends @ \$7
No..... of Others @ \$9 **TOTAL:\$** _____

Names of persons attending:
.....
.....
RSVP by 26/4/02

WHAT DO OUR BOTANISTS DO?

No..... of Friends @ \$11
No..... of Others @ \$16 **TOTAL:\$** _____
Names of persons attending:
.....
.....
RSVP by 10/5/02

AUTUMN VIDEO SHOW

No..... of Friends @ \$11
No..... of Others @ \$16 **TOTAL:\$** _____
Names of persons attending:
.....
.....
RSVP by 20/5/02

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

Please return the relevant section of this form with remittance and stamped self-addressed envelope to: Friends of Royal Botanic Gardens, Gate Lodge, 100 Birdwood Avenue, Melbourne 3004. Telephone: (03) 9650 6398

Cheques/postal orders payable to: Friends of Royal Botanic Gardens

NAME _____
ADDRESS _____

SPECIAL EVENTS IN THE ROYAL BOTANIC GARDENS, MELBOURNE

MARCH 2002

ABORIGINAL HERITAGE WALK

Thursdays and Fridays at 11.00am except 29 March
Sundays 10 and 24 at 10.30am
Groups by arrangement.

GARDENS HIGHLIGHTS GUIDED WALK

Sunday to Friday, 11.00am and 2.00pm (except 29 March)

OBSERVATORY TOUR

STARS, COWS AND SPIDER WEBS
Wednesdays at 2.00pm

THE NIGHT SKY EXPERIENCE GUIDED TOUR

Tuesdays at 9.00pm

FLORA EXPLORER. WALKS WITH RBG STAFF

Fridays at 10.30am. 8/3: Perennial Border; 15/3: Herb Garden; 22/3: Southern Chinese Collection

MOONLIGHT CINEMA

Daily at sundown until Saturday 16 March
Enter via D Gate.
Tickets at gate from 7.30pm or Ticketek 132 849

PLANT CRAFT COTTAGE POT POURRI WORKSHOP

Saturday 23 at 10.00am
Information: Heather Schroeder 9560 8929

PLEASE NOTE that most events incur a charge and require prior booking. It is important that you contact the appropriate phone number. Unless otherwise noted, the number to ring for all listings is 9252 2429.

Please appreciate that, after Botanic News goes to press, it is likely that additional events may be arranged for late in the quarter.

NB: Visitor Centre, shops and café closed on Good Friday

Gardens Highlights Guided Walks do not require prior bookings except for large groups.
Meet at the Visitor Centre, Observatory Gate.

APRIL 2002

ABORIGINAL HERITAGE WALK

Thursdays and Fridays at 11.00am
Sundays 7 and 21 at 10.30am
Groups by arrangement.

GARDENS HIGHLIGHTS GUIDED WALK

Sunday to Friday, 11.00am and 2.00pm

OBSERVATORY TOUR

STARS, COWS AND SPIDER WEBS
Wednesdays at 2.00pm

THE NIGHT SKY EXPERIENCE GUIDED TOUR

Tuesdays at 7.30pm

FLORA EXPLORER. WALKS WITH RBG STAFF

Fridays at 10.30am. 5/4: RBG Nursery; 12/4: Trees; 19/4: NZ Plants; 26/4: Choosing the Right Lawn

SCHOOL HOLIDAY ACTIVITIES

3,4,5,9,10,11 at 10am and 1pm. Contact 9252 2358
THE LADYBIRD'S GARDEN for 4-6 year-olds
THE MINIBEASTS GARDEN for 7-10 year-olds

PLANT CRAFT COTTAGE

SCHOOL HOLIDAY ACTIVITIES
FANTASTIC FRIENDS

2, 3 and 4 between 10.30am and 2.00pm. Drop in for 1/2 hour. \$2

BASKETRY WEEKEND WORKSHOP. Create a sunhat.

6 and 7 at 10.00am
Information: Sally Buckner 9818 2103

PAPERMAKING

Saturday 20 at 10.00am
Information: Marie Revill 9555 1114

MAY 2002

ABORIGINAL HERITAGE WALK

Thursdays and Fridays at 11.00am
Sundays 5 and 19 at 10.30am
Groups by arrangement.

GARDENS HIGHLIGHTS GUIDED WALK

Sunday to Friday, 11.00am and 2.00pm

OBSERVATORY TOUR

STARS, COWS AND SPIDER WEBS
Wednesdays at 2.00pm

THE NIGHT SKY EXPERIENCE GUIDED TOUR

Tuesdays at 7.30pm

FLORA EXPLORER. WALKS WITH RBG STAFF

Fridays at 10.30am

PLANT CRAFT COTTAGE

PLANT CARD WORKSHOP with pressed flowers

SPECIAL EVENTS AT RBG CRANBOURNE

Bookings essential on 5990 2200

SCHOOL HOLIDAY PROGRAMS

EASTER BILBIES AND BANDICOOTS

3,5 and 8 April at 10.00am. For 4-12 year olds

JUNIOR RANGER

4,10 and 11 April at 10.00am. For 6-12 year olds

NIGHT PROWL

10 April at 7.00pm. For adults and children over 6 years

STARRY NIGHTS

18 April at 7.00pm. For adults and children over 6 yrs

BARBECUE AND NIGHT PROWL

Saturday 20 April at 5.30pm

ANNUAL DINNER. Speaker: David Tatnell

Cranbourne Public Hall. Saturday 18 May. Book early.

Flying-foxes

In late January, Banyule City Council voted to support the establishment of a new Melbourne roost for Grey-headed Flying-foxes in Ivanhoe, allowing the relocation trial to commence following finalisation of management plans. This marked an important step in the long-term sustainable management of flying-foxes in Melbourne. If successful, it will relieve the pressure imposed on Fern Gully and surrounding areas by the existing and expansive roost located in the RBG. This is also an important urban wildlife management initiative with potentially worldwide significance.

The relocation site is an isolated area at Horseshoe Bend on the Yarra River in Ivanhoe. It was selected as the most suitable location by scientific experts following assessment against a number of criteria. Due to its degraded state the site will be rehabilitated to improve habitat quality and make it more attractive to flying-foxes.

The proposed strategy is unprecedented in urban wildlife management, but seems to offer the best chance of protecting the Gardens' vegetation in the long term.

The RBG is continuing to work with the Department of Natural Resources and Environment to establish the alternative roost site in order to reduce the population inhabiting the Gardens. As part of this process, the RBG is testing noise deterrent systems for use in the management program to encourage the movement of flying-foxes from the RBG roost. A fly-out count in late January totalled approximately 12,000 bats.

Philip Moors

FRIENDS' BENEFITS

The Gardens Shops offer 10 per cent discount on Members' purchases over \$20. The following businesses kindly offer discounts to Friends on PRIOR presentation of their signed current membership cards, which are not transferable.

Idaho Nurseries

410 Waverley Rd, East Malvern
10% off plants only

Gills Nurseries (all branches)

1 Centre Rd, East Brighton
390 Balcombe Rd, Beaumaris
cnr Bay/Graham Sts, Port Melb.
589 Glenferrie Rd, Hawthorn
5% off plants only

Berna Park Nursery

cnr Park Rd/Paul St, Cheltenham.
5% discount on plants

Bulleen Art and Garden

6 Manningham Rd West, Bulleen
10% off plants, 5% off other goods

Town and Country Gardens

1280 Malvern Rd, Malvern
24 Whitehorse Rd, Balwyn
10% off plants over \$20 only.

Holmesglen Nursery

585 Waverley Rd, Glen Waverley
10% off everything

The Gardeners Corner Store

190-192 New St, Brighton
10% off all plants

Collectors Corner

Springvale Rd, Keysborough
10% off all plants

Kew Nursery

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

Burwood Garden Patch

1418 Toorak Rd, Burwood
10% discount

Garden of Eden Nursery

33 Ferrars St, Albert Park
10% off everything

The Cottage Garden Nursery

Cnr Macedon Ave/Doncaster Rd
North Balwyn. 10% discount,
also 8 punnets for \$22 (GST incl)

The Arts Bookshop

1067 High St, Armadale

Banksia Hill B & B

RMB 5349, Horsham, 3401
10% discount on accommodation

Feldspar at Trentham B&B, via

Daylesford. Ph: 5424 1821

10% disc. on accommodation

*Killarney Cottage B&B

Sorrento Ph: 5984 1970

10% discount on accommodation

*Blackwood Lane Gallery

24 Blackwood Lane, Gembrook
10% off paintings, prints and
commissions

***denotes newcomer to list**

Idaho Nurseries: With the impending retirement of Harry and Greta Jackson and the sale of the nursery site in Waverley Road, East Malvern, special bargains are to be had until 17 March. The Friends acknowledge the generosity of the Jackson family, who have given a discount to Friends since 1985.

All About Apples by Allen Gilbert. Hyland House \$29.95rrp

I found *All About Apples* to be a book full of interest. While it contains clear and detailed instructions regarding the care, maintenance and pruning of apple trees, it also reflects the author's knowledge and interest in grafting and budding, with particular emphasis on the propagation of heritage apples. As well as comprehensive information regarding Australian cultivars, there is a large section which provides details of heritage apples now available; this would assist with the selection of apples for eating or growing.

Much of the advice in the book is along holistic lines, and could be applied to a greater or lesser extent to the whole garden — types of mulch, fertilisers and the control of pests and diseases are generally relevant. It is a very readable and a very practical book.

Virginia Morrison



BOTANIC NEWS is produced quarterly for 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.

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FROM THE GARDENS AND HERBARIUM

ARCUE Review

The Baker Foundation's commitment to funding the RBG's Australian Research Centre for Urban Ecology (ARCUE) included a request for a performance review in its fourth year of operation. This was undertaken last November.

The external panel's review was very encouraging with strong support for the establishment of ARCUE in addressing an important research need, for the research directions of the Centre, and its beneficial collaboration with the University of Melbourne's School of Botany. The panel also commended the Baker Foundation on both its generosity and foresight in committing long-term funding to the Centre.

Recommendations included seeking additional resources to establish PhD scholarships and convening an international symposium on Urban Ecology. The panel also recommended that the Centre further consolidate its position as the foundation centre of urban ecology in Australia and the broader region over the next four years. The ARCUE Board of Management has approved the panel's recommendations, dependent on funding.

Scattering of Ashes

Following public comments late last year in relation to the scattering of human ashes in RBG Melbourne, we have reviewed the RBG's policy and announced that the scattering of human ashes will not be permitted in the Gardens. This revised policy states that the RBG is not a memorial garden, and takes into consideration the needs of all our visitors and staff.

Heritage Victoria

In December Heritage Victoria formally announced their recommendation to the Heritage Council for expansion of the existing registration to include the whole of RBG Melbourne, including the path layout, other significant structures and several notable trees. (The Plant Craft Cottage at H Gate, Gardens House and the Nareeb gates have previously been registered.) Registration will place high level protection on the Gardens, particularly in regard to the management and conservation of the unique 'Guilfoyle' landscape. Heritage Victoria has indicated that they are comfortable with the notion that gardens change over time, although their interest is in the conservation of the RBG's significant cultural and heritage features. They have endorsed the current Master Plan.

The public submission period for this nomination closed on 1 February. The RBG has forwarded a submission to Heritage Victoria. The Heritage Council will consider submissions and finalise a decision on the nomination in due course.

Staff

I am pleased to welcome Grant Cameron to the RBG as Senior Project Manager of the Australian Garden Project at Cranbourne. Grant has arrived from the URS Corporation, a civil engineering firm, where his most recent projects included the Docklands development and the refurbishment of Lake Eppalock near Bendigo. Grant's arrival marks the commencement of Phase 1 of the Australian Garden Project, with construction expected to proceed later this year.

Philip Moors
Director