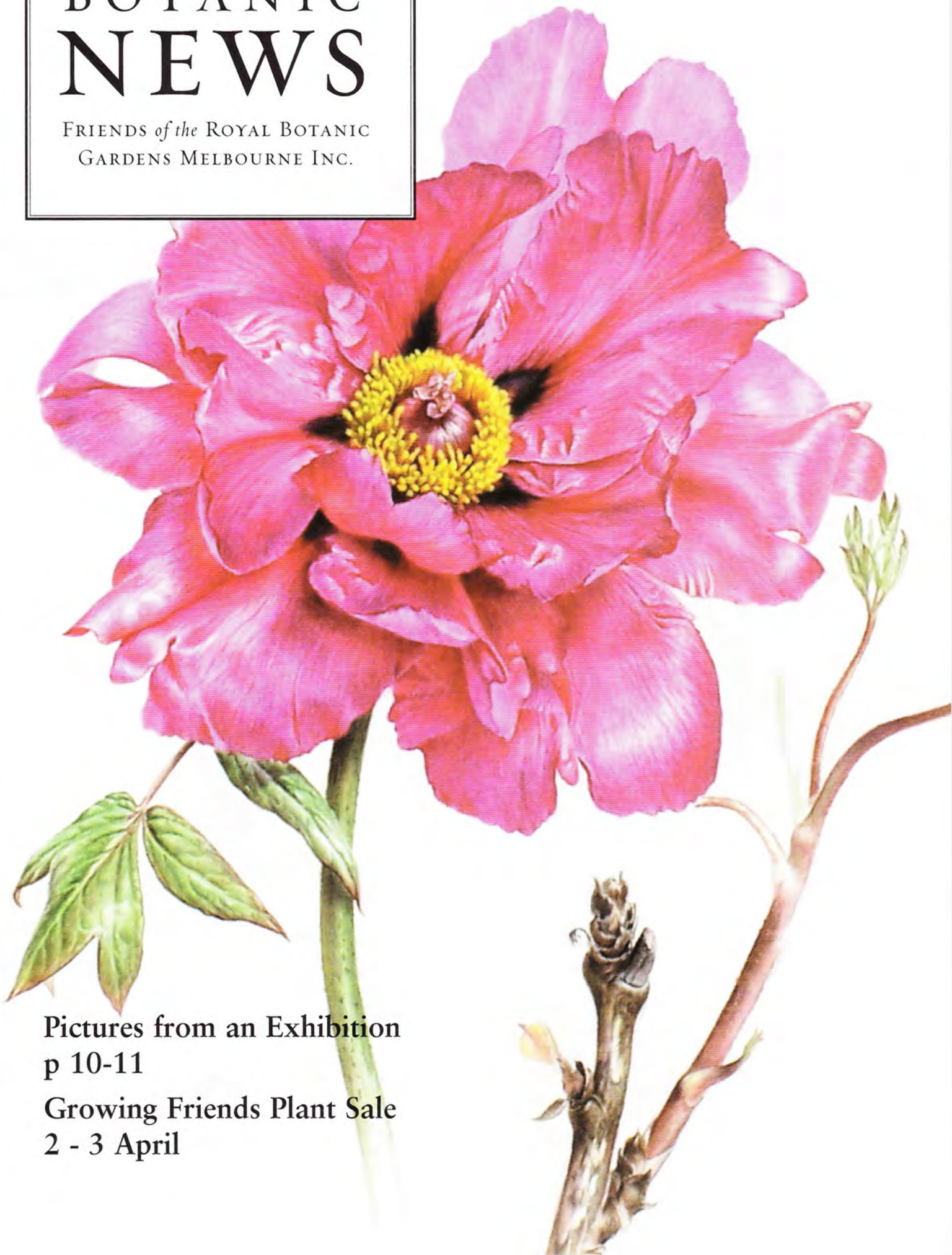


Autumn 2005

BOTANIC NEWS

FRIENDS *of the* ROYAL BOTANIC
GARDENS MELBOURNE INC.



Pictures from an Exhibition
p 10-11

Growing Friends Plant Sale
2 - 3 April

FROM THE PRESIDENT

For the Friends, 2004 ended on a resounding high with The Art of Botanical Illustration Exhibition. It was the most successful we have held. Our congratulations and thanks go to all the artists, the convener of the Botanical Illustrators, Edyta Hoxley, and everyone else who contributed so much to ensure that the works exhibited were of the highest standard and that everything to do with the Exhibition ran so smoothly. That the work exhibited

was of such a high standard was a reflection of the quality of our teachers of botanical art. We were delighted that one of them, Dianne Emery, won the Celia Rosser Medal

for her beautiful painting of *Paeonia suffruticosa* 'Rimpo'. For full details of the Exhibition see pages 10 and 11.

It was great to see so many Friends at our Christmas cocktail party at Gardens House, the last of our activities for 2004. I hope that, like me, all the Friends and readers of *Botanic News* enjoyed the festive season.

The early months of each year are a quiet time in respect of our activities, but not for the Gardens. I hope many of you visited it during the holidays, particularly the events for

families. Meanwhile, some of our Members, including the members of the Activities Committee, have been busy organising this year's events. The activities scheduled for the first half of the year are listed in this issue of *Botanic News*, together with a booking form inserted as a flyer.

I hope as many of you as possible will attend

these events and invite others, who are not yet Friends, to come.

Also, the Botanical Illustrators have continued to be active during the summer, running special workshops, and the Growing

Friends have been hard at work propagating and potting for the Autumn plant sale. It will be held on April 2 and 3. Please note these dates in your diaries.

Irwin Newman

RBG Cranbourne

The Winter Lecture Series will commence in May.

For further information, contact 03 5990 2200, email rbgc@rbg.vic.gov.au or visit their website: www.rbg.vic.gov.au



Notes from Gate Lodge

It is with great sadness that we record the death of one of our loyal volunteers, Elizabeth (Betty) Fincher.

Elizabeth volunteered for the Friends over a period of sixteen years. Her volunteering with our organisation started in the Friends' Shop in 1988 where she worked on a regular basis, serving customers and even making note-books at home which were sold in the shop to raise money for the Friends.

In our office, she used her experience from her previous employment. She established a filing system for the membership renewal forms which she then adapted when the Friends adopted a twelve-month membership system. The fact that this system has withstood the test of time, and also the auditors, is an indication of its suitability and reliability. After setting up the system, she would come in on a regular basis to file away

the forms, a job performed with meticulous accuracy. Five times a year she also helped with the mailing of the Friends' newsletter and Annual Reports, and was willing to help in the office when staff were on leave.

In December 1999 at the Friends' Christmas Cocktail Party, Elizabeth was honoured for her long-standing service to the Friends by the presentation of a Certificate of Appreciation by the then President, Sir Ninian Stephen. Last year, the Friends decided to recognise in a tangible way the length of service of their volunteers with

ten years or more consistent voluntary service, in the form of a Volunteer Service Badge. Elizabeth was presented with her 15-year badge at the Annual General Meeting in November last year.

Elizabeth was a very special person and much loved by all who met her at the Friends. She will be sorely missed.

Virginia Henderson

Photo: Greg Hoxley



Patron John Landy and President Irwin Newman study some of the artwork at the Exhibition.

Photo: Virginia Henderson



FROM THE GARDENS AND HERBARIUM

Contents

A Staff Profile	4
Growing Friends	5
Activities	6
Members	9
Illustrators	10
Gardens	12
Book Review	13
Botanic Birds	14

Front Cover: Celia Rosser medallist Dianne Emery's rendering of *Peony suffruticosa* 'Rimpo', exhibited at The Art of Botanical Illustration Exhibition 2004. See pages 10, 11



Photo: Jennifer Marshall



The Gardens Shop

The Gardens Shop at RBG Melbourne is the proud winner of the Tourism Retailing category in the Melbourne Airport 2004 Victorian Tourism Awards. Competing premier retail tourism outlets included Hepburn Springs, the Gold Shop at Sovereign Hill and Port Campbell Shopping. Sweet Decadence at Locantro, Daylesford, shared the Award.

Entrants are judged on factors ranging from the quality and diversity of their product ranges and their customer service, to other aspects such as sustainability and occupational health and safety. Factors which set The Gardens Shop apart were the innovative approach to retailing and the individual and unique nature of the products, which are botanically inspired.

Water Management

The RBG has begun work on a comprehensive Water Management Plan. Our recent emphasis has been on water conservation from an irrigation perspective, and we have achieved significant reductions in irrigation water usage over the past decade. The Water Management Plan will go further and inform the future directions of the RBG with respect to domestic as well as irrigation water usage, and the health and maintenance of the RBG's lakes and waterways. The Plan will determine how water can best be used, conserved and managed by the organisation. It is envisaged that the plan will be developed by September 2005.

Australian Garden

The magnificent landscape envisaged by the Cranbourne Australian Garden designers is nearly complete, and planting is well under way. We hope that the Exhibition Gardens, whose themes will change over time, will inspire many home gardeners to think outside the square.

A generous grant from The Hugh Williamson Foundation will fund the new and innovative Master Gardeners' Program at the Australian Garden. Once trained, the volunteer Master Gardeners will work on site in the Australian Garden, interacting with, and offering practical horticultural advice to, visitors.

Summer Students at the National Herbarium

This Summer's Jim Willis Studentship scholars were Nina Sawtell and Claire Rawlinson. The Studentships, which honour the late Dr James Hamlyn Willis, are generously supported by the Cybec Foundation.

Nina Sawtell has finished her third year in a Bachelor of Science (Botany and Geography majors) at The University of Melbourne. Her project involved investigating the association of *Melaleuca ericifolia* with mycorrhizal fungi. This project was co-supervised by Rob Cross and Liz James.

Claire Rawlinson has finished her fourth year of a Conservation Biology and Environmental Management degree at Victoria University's

St Albans campus. Entitled *Grasses that link Australia and South America. Is there a relationship between Austrostipa setacea and the South American genus Piptochaetium?*, Claire's project was supervised by Dan Murphy and Neville Walsh.

The Esma Salkin Student for this Summer was Margy Hawke. The studentship is generously supported by the Australian Daisy Study Group. Margy has completed the third year of a Bachelor of Science (Botany and Geology majors) at The University of Melbourne. She investigated *Olearia rugosa* (Wrinkled Daisy-bush), supervised by our Conservation Botanist, Neville Walsh.

The Ian Potter Foundation Children's Garden

The garden has proved to be a hit with children of all ages since it opened. Numbers have exceeded expectations, with the garden attracting over 4000 visitors on some weekends. A generous grant, received in late 2004 from Alec Prentice Sewell through The Ian Potter Foundation, will fund the construction of the proposed Activity Shelter, the expansion of education programs and the provision of additional services including subsidised transport to and from RBG Melbourne, so that a greater number of children may enjoy the garden.

In Memoriam Program

I have previously mentioned the RBG's Planned Giving Programs. One that may be of

interest to the Friends is the *In Memoriam Program*. This allows families and individuals arranging a funeral service for a loved one to request that, instead of sending flowers to the service, relatives and friends make a memorial gift to the Royal Botanic Gardens.

These donors will receive a tax-deductible receipt from the Royal Botanic Gardens Foundation. The family will receive a list of people who have made donations. In accordance with privacy legislation, those who have made donations will not receive further unsolicited requests for donations from the Gardens. A brochure providing further details of the *In Memoriam Program* is enclosed with this edition of *Botanic News*. Further copies of the brochure can be obtained from Judy Dunster on 9252 2493.

RBG Regulations

The new Royal Botanic Gardens Regulations 2004 commenced operation on 1 December and will operate for a period of ten years. The new Regulations are similar to the previous ones, but they are more flexible, broader in scope and also regulate entry fees to the Australian Garden. The RBG Melbourne Friends have been granted a written authority under the Regulations to conduct their full range of activities in the Gardens.

Philip Moors, Director

Roger Spencer

As Senior Horticultural Botanist at the Royal Botanic Gardens, Roger enjoys the academic and social diversity his job affords him. Expert in popular horticulture and academic botanical research, Roger feels he is particularly fortunate being constantly involved with a wide range of people including home gardeners, industrial and agricultural personnel, tertiary students and university researchers.

Born in England, Roger grew up at Clacton-on-Sea where he enjoyed the seaside and was a lifeguard in his late teens. Successful academically and in sport while attending the University of Wales' Aberystwyth College, he majored in Microbiology and was shotput, javelin and discus champion in his final year. He obtained a bronze medal for the discus throw at the British Universities championships.

On completion of his science degree Roger's first position was to study the taxonomy of algae in Port Phillip Bay with Dr Sophie Ducker from The University of Melbourne's Botany Department. This study led to a Master's degree and two years later to a Ph.D.

His next project was to have been an environmental study and then a study of Western-port Bay but Roger felt he needed a change. In 1972 he applied to become a gardener at RBG Melbourne. So began a long and successful association. He enjoyed the outdoor work in his allocated conifer section and the spare time he had for

reading in the evenings.

At this time there was no listing of RBG plants. Roger initiated listing and identifying them, beginning with the Australian Rainforest Border and Palms. He, and others, headed by Peter Lumley, surveyed the RBG into ten-square-metre grids, in which all the identified plants were entered. This huge project, creating the RBG Census, took two years to complete. A map on the wall marked their progress. Roger recalls the extraordinarily long hours they worked as completion time approached. Once, as they were leaving at 3am, they disturbed the then Director's dog, and hence the whole family.

By this stage Roger had transferred from the gardens staff to the academic staff as a Records Officer. Peter, Roger and a group of technical assistants engaged in frenetic specimen mounting to establish the Horticultural Reference Set of 25,000 different species. This reference material is used to assist in identification of specimens for RBG staff, the public, industry and others including the Growing Friends. This is a facet of Roger's work he particularly enjoys.

Roger helped with setting up the original Grey Garden and Perennial Border and also worked with the Herb Society in the establishment of the Herb Garden. His numerous publications include books, articles for scientific journals, detailed reports, technical articles and popular horticulture articles in newspapers and magazines. Possibly his most significant scientific



publication is the series, *A Horticultural Flora of South-Eastern Australia*.

Currently Roger and Rob Cross are producing a new book, *Gardening in the 21st Century*. This will deal with issues of environmentally responsible horticulture from theoretical and practical perspectives.

In addition to his role at the RBG, Roger is Chairperson for the Australian Cultivar Regulatory Authority; Scientific Adviser for the Ornamental Plant Collection Association; Facilitator for the Australian Botanical Gardens Weed Network; and Honorary Plant Identifier for the Royal Children's Hospital. Roger is married with two sons. He and his wife are music lovers who both attend MSO Subscription Series and play in the Surrey Hills Orchestra. Roger obtained his *A.Mus.A* many years ago. He played the flute for ten years but now concentrates on the French horn that he plays in the orchestra.

In his amazingly busy life Roger also finds time for a weekly visit to the gym!

Carolyn Tomkins

GROWING FRIENDS

Autumn Plant Sale

Saturday 2 April, 10.00am-4.00pm

Sunday 3 April, 10.00am-3.00pm

Members may purchase plants from the Nursery until Friday, 11 March. We will be closed for sales from 18 March to 9 April inclusive to allow for sale preparation and inventories.

The Terrific Temptations flyer in this issue of *Botanic News* outlines a selection of the special plants we will have for sale, with the coveted Growing Friends' Autumn Sale Catalogue available from approximately 9.30am on the Saturday morning. The variety of bulbs, succulents, natives, shrubs and perennials (including our 'greys') available at this sale are as enticing as Christmas to any gardener.

During January we witnessed and admired the slender wands of deep pink flowers on *Francoa sonchifolia* and the panicles of deep pink

star-shaped flowers with striking crimson markings of the *F. Rogerson's Form*. Both varieties are admirable edging plants, reasonably drought tolerant and a fine addition to your garden's semi-shaded areas. They won't be flowering during the sale, so keep them in mind. Perhaps you have recently developed a wild grass area (for reasons we can all understand) – we currently have in stock *Primula veris* which is an unusual species with pendent yellow flowers and *P. Wanda*, a long-flowering cultivar producing clusters of claret-red flowers in Spring. Both are ideal for naturalising in borders or wild grass areas. These varieties shouldn't be confused with the more common annuals and are definitely worth a look.

We also hope to have a small selection of the *Sarracenia* range available. *Sarracenia*s are

a stimulating genus for children with a predilection for collections. An eight-year-old visitor at our last sale successfully acquired one of the last remaining *Sarracenia alata* plants after establishing a serious commitment to its maintenance with his mum (they're not that hard to care for). The young man had also selected, and convinced Mum to buy, a *Sempervivum arachnoideum* – this interesting succulent looks like it's covered in cobwebs. What a boy.

There are far too many plants to detail, but worth mentioning among the more spectacular plants at our Spring sale was the *Ficus dammaropsis*, commonly called the Dinner-plate Fig. They all went like hot cakes, so our cuttings team will be cooking up some more.

As individual gardeners, the Growing Friends regularly visit nurseries within their respective residential range and beyond to specialist outlets, keeping an eye on 'what's out there'. Over the last few years, there has been a considerable increase in plant prices, particularly for the more rare and unusual varieties. Our regular customers will be familiar with our current pricing system, historically based on pot sizes with special price tags for the particularly rare and unusual plants. With market values of many plants in mind, the Growing Friends' Plant Sales currently offer outstanding value to gardeners wishing to support the Royal Botanic Gardens of Melbourne.

See you at the Sale.



Jocelyn Houghton (wearing dark coat) surrounded by a happy band of Growing Friends.

It was with sadness that we received the news of the passing of a Growing Friend on 25 December 2004.

Jocelyn Houghton had been a consistently reliable member of the group since 1989, providing a vital link in the chain of operations.

She efficiently took care of our publicity, the sale of our catalogues at the entry tent and, in later years, supported Virginia Morrison on our database with the processing of plant labels.

During her years with the Growing Friends, we all admired and respected Jocelyn's wide involvement in voluntary activities and greatly appreciated her Friday commitment. We will miss her.

Pam Eames, *Convener*

A reminder that shopping bags with handles are very useful for carrying home your plants. This is a good way to recycle bags, and we would be grateful for any you might like to contribute on Sale days.

Photo: Steven Wells



Echeveria 'Blue curl', one of the Terrific Temptations being offered at the coming Plant Sale

ACTIVITIES



New Members' Welcome

Tuesday 1 March at 5.30pm
Mueller Hall, National Herbarium

Invitations have been sent to all new Friends to come to our next 'getting-to-know-you' gathering. 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, brief talks by our committee leaders, and a welcome by the Director of the Gardens. Following this, Voluntary Guides will take you on a

guided tour of the Gardens.

All those who have joined the Friends since our last Welcome, and those who have already requested invitations to an evening Welcome, will automatically be invited.

If you have not been able to attend a previous New Members' Welcome and would like to come this time, you are also warmly invited. Please call our office on 9650 6398.



The Gardens of Second Empire Paris

ILLUSTRATED TALK
by Sylvia Sagona

Thursday 17 March
at 6.30 for 7.00pm
Mueller Hall, National Herbarium
Cost: \$20 Friends \$15
RSVP by Monday 14 March
on enclosed booking form

Enjoy a touch of Paris with a glass of wine and savouries before the talk

Sylvia Sagona is a lecturer in C19 French Art and Literature and Italian Romanticism at The University of Melbourne. She has also lectured in France, having received a scholarship from the French Government.

When Louis-Napoleon swept to power in 1851, he wished to create a healthy and secure city out of the dark mediaeval labyrinth of central Paris. He dotted the city with Kensington-style squares and

whimsical gardens. The Parc Monceau was a meeting place for the wealthy, the Buttes de Chaumont and the Bois de Boulogne imitated Green Park and Hyde Park, and the Serres d'Auteuil exhibited exotic species in huge glasshouses.

Sylvia will examine the political and aesthetic ideas behind the greening of Paris and the images that have been left behind by the Impressionists and writers of that time.



A Feast for the Senses

BUS TRIP

Wednesday 30 March
Meet at carpark adjacent to Vision Australia, Glenferrie Rd, Kooyong.
Leaving 9.00am sharp, returning approx. 5.00pm
Cost: \$55 includes all entry fees, guided tour of sculpture exhibition, gourmet lunch at Werribee Park and cheese tastings.
RSVP by Wednesday 23 March
on enclosed booking form

Our day will begin at *Roraima*, a plant nursery specialising in succulents, exotics and architectural plants, where artistic landscape designer Lyle Filipi will show us around. We will have morning tea here, then proceed to Werribee Park where we'll be treated to an escorted tour of the Helen Lempriere National Sculpture Award entries and enjoy a gourmet basket lunch. If time permits, Friends may wander

through the historic gardens or take in the Permanent Sculpture Walk, which extends to the river.

On our way home we will visit the Gilbert Chandler Institute for cheese tastings and the opportunity to buy some prize-winning cheeses.

Truly a day which will be a feast for the senses.

ACTIVITIES



Autumn Fit Friends Ramble

MELBOURNE UNIVERSITY

Tuesday 12 April at 10am sharp
Meet at the NW corner of Grattan and Swanston Streets, Carlton
Cost: \$8 Friends \$5
RSVP by Thursday 7 April on enclosed booking form
Please wear comfortable walking shoes, bring drinks and morning snacks, and be able to keep up a good walking pace.

Melbourne University covers a huge site in Parkville and its architecture ranges from Nineteenth Century to the present day. The grounds of the University abound with a rich and varied selection of significant and historic trees.

Linden Gillbank, a Professor of Botany enthralled by all aspects of plants and our interactions with them, works in the Philosophy Department and is currently writing the

history of the buildings and plantings at the University.

She will guide us around the campus with a tour of fascinating buildings and their wonderful surrounds.

The walk should finish by 12 noon, and the proximity of Lygon Street makes it very accessible for an afternoon of lunch and shopping.



Autumn 'Talking Plants' Morning

DECIDUOUS TREES FOR AUTUMN COLOUR

Friday 29 April at 10.30am
Meet at Gate Lodge (opposite Shrine)
Cost: \$5
Members are welcome to bring a guest
RSVP by Tuesday 26 April on enclosed booking form
Morning tea will be served during the morning.

The Autumn *Talking Plants* theme will be interesting deciduous trees and shrubs for autumn colour, with a knowledgeable person who will discuss the morning's topic and have some terrific suggestions for us.

The morning will be held in the Gate Lodge garden (weather permitting) and will be an informal gathering of Friends with a common interest

in plants and gardening. All those attending are invited to bring a piece of a favourite plant, autumnal if possible, to show and share information.

After morning tea, there will be an opportunity to visit the Growing Friends Nursery to peruse their range of plants.



Autumn Quarterly Insiders' Walk

AUTUMN VISTAS AND DEMONSTRATION OF FOLIAGE, FRUITS AND BERRIES ARRANGEMENT

Thursday 5 May, leaving at 10.00a.m. sharp from Gate Lodge.
Cost: \$10 MEMBERS ONLY
RSVP: Friday 29 April on enclosed booking form
Payment must accompany booking as this is a restricted number event.

Enjoy the changing hues of the plant world on our Quarterly Insiders Walk through the Royal Botanic Gardens as the colourful autumn pigments are unveiled before leaf fall.

A Voluntary Guide will lead us through the attractive seasonal vistas, show us plants that produce spectacular berries and other autumn highlights.

On our return to the Barrachi Room, Robyn

Tymms, the Friends' talented floral designer, will demonstrate how to put together an arrangement using colourful foliage, fruits and berries.

Morning tea will be served during the demonstration.

ACTIVITIES



An Australian Herbal Life

ILLUSTRATED TALK
by Penny Woodward

Wednesday 18 May at 10.30 for 11.00am

Mueller Hall, National Herbarium

Cost: \$20 Friends \$15

RSVP: Thursday 12 May on enclosed booking form

Please join us for morning tea before the talk.

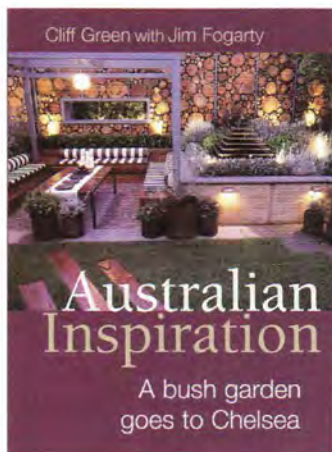
Penny Woodward, trained in Botany and Zoology, has studied and worked at the Chelsea Physic Garden. In Australia she's been caretaker for the National Trust Property, Mooramong, and ran a herb nursery while she and her husband built their house and garden.

She is the author of five books: *An Australian Herbal*; *Garlic and Friends*; *Pest Repellent Plants*; *Asian Herbs and Vegetables*, and *Grow Your*

Own Herbal Remedies.

Penny is currently working on a book on the people, plants and recipes of Melbourne's inner-city community gardens and has just finished a children's book on herbs. She takes all her own photographs for her books and articles.

The talk will embrace topics from all of her books, signed copies of which will be available for purchase.



The Chelsea Challenge

ILLUSTRATED TALK
by Jim Fogarty, Landscape Designer

Wednesday 15 June

at 6.00 for 6.30pm

Mueller Hall, National Herbarium

Cost: \$20 Friends \$15

RSVP by Friday 10 June on enclosed booking form

Join us for a glass of wine and savouries before the talk.

After winning back-to-back gold medals at every Melbourne International Flower and Garden Show, Jim and his team were at a loss what to do next. After some brainstorming, the solution became obvious: why not pit their skills against the best in the world? Why not take their award-winning garden to the Olympic Games of horticulture – The Chelsea Flower Show?

An animated and inspiring

speaker, Jim will share his extraordinary experiences in designing and building show gardens in Australia, the ultimate challenge at Chelsea 2004, where his garden won a Silver Gilt Medal, as well as Chelsea 2005 where he is a team member on Julian Dowle's twenty-sixth and last Chelsea show garden on the main avenue.

Signed copies of Jim's book will be on sale.



Pruning Course in the Royal Botanic Gardens

Session 1: Wednesday 15 June,
9.30am – 12.30pm

Session 2: Wednesday 16 November,
9.30am – 12.30pm

Cost: \$60 FOR TWO SESSIONS,
including morning tea.
MEMBERS ONLY. Numbers strictly
limited to 12 people.

RSVP to the Friends' office on
9650 6398.

In conjunction with the RBG Horticultural Staff, the Friends are offering a two-part Basic Pruning Course.

The course will be kept to a maximum of 12 people, and will involve both classroom-style learning and hands-on practical pruning instruction provided by RBG staff. Participants should acquire a good basic grounding in pruning.

Session 1: Theory on the principles of pruning including why we prune and how, plus hands-on tuition in pruning evergreen shrubs.

Session 2: Revision of the principles of pruning, plus hands-on tuition in pruning deciduous shrubs.

4-hour meter parking is available in Birdwood Avenue.

MEMBERS

Visit To Tasmania, 23-28 November

Merryle Johnson escorted 26 Friends to Launceston last November to visit fifteen historic homes and gardens, taste local wines and seafood, and travel through some wonderful countryside down to Hobart. We all packed warm clothing, expecting very chilly weather, but instead we experienced six days of fabulous blue skies. All the gardens were in full flower – thousands of roses, peonies, clematis, unusual and rare perennials, and many 200-year-old trees.

We visited the original homes of the three Archer brothers, who arrived in Tasmania in 1826: Brickendon, still lived in by the Archer family and still a working farm; Woolmers, now the site of the National Rose Garden, established four years ago, with hundreds of roses in full bloom; and Panshanger, considered the best Georgian-style house in Tasmania.

Another 1850s house, still inhabited by descendants of the original owners, had fields of opium poppies in full bloom (when the opium ripens, the fields are supervised by satellite and infra-red from helicopters – the ‘Poppy Squad’).

Wychwood, a lovely garden at Mole Creek had many rare plants and a turf maze in which to meditate.

Summercotes, near Ross, a significant historic squatter’s homestead, still has original farm machinery and convicts’ quarters.



Oakwood, Mangalore.



High Peak, Mt Wellington – view through front door



Friends in The Scented Rose Garden, looking towards Glazer Bay

We visited Oakwood, home of two sculptors, with unusual bird baths, garden sculptures and water features.

The Scented Rose Garden overlooking the Huon Valley is filled with hundreds of David Austin roses and clematis.

On our last day, we visited two gardens in Hobart and finished with lunch on Mount Wellington at High Peak, a fourth-generation home and

garden with ancient trees and huge rhododendrons but no roses because of wallabies and possums from the bush below.

A very rewarding and happy trip – thank you, Merryle.

Judy Jarman

Photos taken by Judy Jarman

Pittsburgh Visit October 2004

The Hunt Institute for Botanical Documentation is a research division of the Carnegie-Mellon University in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, USA. The Institute was founded in 1960 by the late Mr and Mrs Roy Hunt, who bequeathed their rich collection of botanical art and the funding for a living resource to be actively curated and used productively in the service of science and scholarship.

The Institute held its eleventh International Exhibition of Botanical Art and Documentation in October 2004. Artists from around the world including USA, UK, Japan, The Netherlands, Canada, South Africa, Russia, Czech Republic, France, Italy and, of course, Australia, were invited to participate. Oz was well represented by NSW artists, Beverly Allen, Bronwyn Van de Graaff and Elaine Musgrave and Victorians, Margaret Muffet and Rita Parkinson.

Of course all the artists appreciated the opportunity to get together, see each other’s work and discuss the state of botanic art today. As is usually the case with any group of like-minded people, there was no opportunity lost to do just that. It was interesting for us to see the wide perspective the exhibition took on present-day practice of the botanical arts, also including some work from the past to give it perspective.

Rita Parkinson

ILLUSTRATORS

Classes

Term 2 will start on Tuesday 26 April.

Classes will be held on Tuesday evenings and in the daytime on Mondays, Wednesdays (two sessions), Fridays and Saturdays. 2.5hr classes: \$245 (incl GST), Friends \$205 (incl GST) 3hr classes: \$280 (incl GST), Friends \$240 (incl GST)

For further information on classes contact the Friends' office on 9650 6398

Whirlybirds

The Whirlybirds are in full swing for 2005. They meet each Tuesday in the Whirling Room Studio.

This group of botanical artist Friends share a common interest in painting, drawing and studying the fascinating world of plant life in a casual, caring and supportive atmosphere.

If you would like more details regarding this group, contact Miriam Blight on 9583 6098.



Botanical Illustrators Quarterly Meeting

GOUACHE PAINTING

Tuesday 8 March

10.00am for 10.30am

In the Whirling Room Studio

Cost \$5.50 (incl GST) Pay on the day

RSVP: Friends office on 9650 6398

A short workshop on gouache painting, with an introduction by Rita Parkinson, one of the few artists who uses this medium today.

Bring your own lunch and paper, brushes and paint in order to experiment with the technique (some paint to share will be available).

Election of New Illustrators Committee

Tuesday, 8 March, 12.30-1.30pm

Anyone wishing to nominate for positions on the committee should attend the meeting or leave nominations with the Friends' Office prior to this date.

The Art of Botanical Illustration 2004

In November 2004 we again held a very successful *The Art of Botanical Illustration* Exhibition. Eighty-six paintings were sold, including seven to a collector in New York who made his selection via our outstanding web catalogue. Our net profit was \$45,835 – about \$11,000 more than the 2002 exhibition.

The opening reception was attended by some of Australia's leading botanical artists including Margaret Stones, Celia Rosser and Jenny Phillips.

The artists agreed that Domain House was an excellent venue, with more space to display the paintings and better lighting, expertly supplied by Expohire. We look forward to great things happening at this venue with future exhibitions. The next should be in November 2006.

Dianne Emery was awarded a Celia Rosser Medal for her outstanding paintings of Peonies and a Waratah. Dianne has been a teacher and artist for many years and is well known for the classes and workshops she has been conducting for us. She has exhibited with us since 1994, is represented in the State Botanical Collection, and in 2002 was one of the inaugural winners of the Celia Rosser Medal.

Honourable mentions were awarded for the first time at this exhibition – to Alison Gianangeli, Fiona McKinnon and Rita Parkinson.

Alison Gianangeli commenced botanical

illustration with Dianne Emery following a career in drawing and design in fashion and textiles. She has exhibited with us since 2000 and is represented in private collections and the State Botanical Collection.

Fiona McKinnon trained in art and taught at secondary schools for many years. She worked mostly in oils but found she needed to learn about watercolours and so joined Jenny Phillips' class when Jenny was teaching for the Friends at the Royal Botanic Gardens. She now teaches at Jenny's studio, has painted botanical art exclusively for the past ten years and has exhibited in *The Art of Botanical Illustration* since 1994. In May 2005, Fiona will be guest artist at Sydney's Botanica exhibition.

Rita Parkinson specialised in illustration for children's literature and educational publishing including work on natural history and science after graduating in Art at London University. She now dedicates her time to botanical art and has exhibited with us since 2000. She has work in public and private collections in USA, UK, Australia and NZ, including the State Botanical Collection.

An exhibition of this standard requires an enormous amount of work from many volunteers and from the artists who produced the beautiful artwork. Thank you to everyone who contributed to our success.

Judy Jarman/Edyta Hoxley

EXHIBITION



Facing page:
 Rita Parkinson: *Agave americana*
 var. *stricta*
 This page: (L to R)
 Dianne Emery - *Peony suffruticosa*
 'Rimpo'
 Sandra Sanger: *Viola dissecta* -
 Celestial Violet
 Ruth Jackson: *Allocasuarina*
littoralis - Black Sheoak
 Alison Gianangeli: *Nepenthes x*
allardii
 Fiona McKinnon: *Eriobotrya*
japonica
 Robyn Goding: *Epacris impressa*
 James Hobill: *Banksia speciosa* -
 Showy Banksia
 Jennifer Wilkinson: *Vitis vinifera*
 var. *pinot* - Pinot Wine Grapes
 Photos: Greg Hoxley

Photo: Jennifer Marshall



At last we launched into a summer with a decent measure of rainfall. Horticulturally, this has been a blessing. Plants which for the past few seasons bore the attitude of reluctant conscripts to a dinner party, have this season cast aside their indifference, sprung into foliage and flower, and are now well through the soup course and into the main dish, regaling their fellow guests with colourful tales. They are now the life of the party.

Some, it should be said, have taken on this role with a little too much gusto, and having gone too enthusiastic too early on the foliage front with the resulting extra weight up top, have subsequently come loose from their moorings, and toppled over (dinner guests take note). This is perhaps the legacy of a number of poor seasons' growth and consequent poor root vigour, which may have affected their stability badly, together with wetter-than-usual soil (lower frictional values) and of course the additional foliage load.

In response, several large trees took on a more relaxed

horizontal attitude in early summer. The Pin Oak *Quercus palustris* near the Tea Rooms, and White Basswood *Tilia heterophylla* near 'H' Gate both unfortunately descended into the Lake, which presented our Arboricultural staff with a measure of challenge in the

The intensity of the colour display from year to year is a function of cold night temperature, intensity of sunlight and soil/plant moisture levels.

clean-up process. The arborists were, of course, up to the challenge as always. I suppose that cutting up and removing tree debris from a lake is no more difficult than dangling on the end of a rope high up in a tree's canopy, trying to do the same.

Traditionally, the accolades for autumnal display have been directed towards the usual exhibitionists – the autumn foliage kings. Some of them show no modesty, openly seeking to out-compete their neighbours with almost unnaturally bright displays. Even in Melbourne's mild

temperatures, some of the reliable performers will colour up nicely. Hornbeams, Oaks, Crepe Myrtles, Liquidambars... they know who they are. While autumn colour and leaf abscission is brought on by lengthening nights and shorter days, the intensity of the colour display from year to year is a function of cold night temperature, intensity of sunlight and soil/plant moisture levels.

Let's take a step back. I'm sure we all recall that leaf tissue generally contains a green pigment called chlorophyll, and that this has something to do with photosynthesis. I can report that a quick check of the internet tells us that chlorophyll molecules are large (again, no such thing as a *quick* check – a search for 'autumn' brings up

the plant starts to prepare to shed its leaves (abscission), the tissue joining the leaf to the stem thickens, which prevents the replenishment of chlorophyll in the leaf. As the chlorophyll in the leaf breaks down two secondary groups of pigments – carotenoids (orange) and xanthophylls (yellow) – may be revealed. These are more stable than chlorophyll, and therefore hang around longer in autumn, once the replenishing foods are withdrawn from the leaf. They absorb blue-green and bluish light, and so appear yellow or orange. This creates the golden tone which many trees such as birches and poplars display in autumn.

A third type of pigment in leaves is anthocyanin, which absorbs blue, blue-green and green light, and which therefore appear red (best to just accept this). The anthocyanins are absorbed in cell sap, and are formed when the concentration of sugars in the cell sap becomes quite high. The greatest concentrations of sugars – and therefore anthocyanins in

over 16 million entries in 0.16 seconds; scan of first screenful reveals that 8 of the 10 are for Autumn, which is defined as "...a Dutch gothic rock/metal band with female vocals, male grunt and dark symphonic orchestral tunes...". God bless the internet). With a molecular structure of $C_{55}H_{70}MgN_4O_6$, you wouldn't want to meet a bad-tempered chlorophyll in a dark alley! It absorbs sunlight, which is then supplied as energy to transform carbon dioxide into oxygen and water and carbohydrates (plant food). Too easy.

As autumn comes on and



Photo: Richard Barley

Viburnum opulus 'Notcutt's Variety'

selected plants – are achieved when there is bright sunlight (as there often is in Melbourne in autumn; dry weather (also a good bet in Melbourne in autumn) so the sugar is less diluted in the leaf; and cool night-time temperatures (to limit the re-supply of chlorophyll to the leaves).

There was considerable conjecture in a recent scientific article about the reason for plants evolving the mechanisms to display autumn colour. Some hypothesised that it is a defence against insect infestation – or perhaps that it enhances the attraction of pollinating birds or insects, which in turn gives it a reproductive advantage over duller plants. Perhaps the colours lure birds to nest locally, and thereby assist in control of harmful insect pests. The jury is still out on this.

Autumn gains much of its charm in my view, however, not from the loudly-coloured displays of the deciduous trees, but from the various more subtle textures, tones and features of the understorey. For example, the fruits of a *Rosa rugosa*, or one of a number of *Viburnum* species and cultivars have appeared by late summer, and by autumn have ripened and together with the fading leaves, present an appealing rustic character.

Viburnum opulus Notcutt's Variety is a favourite (it grows just uphill from the Rose Pavilion in the Gardens), but there are many, many more. The RBG holds a large collection of *Viburnums* – some 94 species and cultivars in a total of over 400 plants. The

epicentre of the collection is in the group of shrubberies in the south-western part of the Tennyson Lawn, and particularly in the aptly titled *Viburnum* Bed. The *Viburnum* collection is registered by the Ornamental Plant Conservation Association of Australia, Inc. (OPCAA), and is keenly tended and developed by horticulturist David Roberts.

Combine some maturing fruits with a few tastefully discarded leaves on the ground, and one is starting to get a bit of a flavour of the season Autumn.

*How many things by season seasoned are
To their right praise and true perfection!*

Smart fellow, that Shakespeare.

Richard Barley

Gardens Market

As the thunder and lighting threatened overhead the first Gardens Market got underway on the Southern Cross Lawn at Observatory Gate. Held on

Saturday 11 December, the Gardens Market looked stunning with all the market umbrellas set out on the lawn. There were more than 70 stallholders and their wares from all over Victoria. The Markets' focus is on all things that come from plants or are inspired by nature. So with a botanical theme, products included seasonal fruit, gourmet food products, horticultural books, natural skin products and plenty of things for the garden including funky wire plant stands, plants, and one-off sculptural pieces. Meet the growers and producers and learn more about their products as you stroll around one of the most beautiful Gardens in Australia.

After two successful Markets, the next promises to be even better.

So, regardless of the weather, the next Gardens Market will be held on the Southern Cross Lawn by Observatory Gate on 19 March.

Market time is 9.00am – 2.30pm.

Andrew Laidlaw

Walking Melbourne's Domain Parklands

by L. 'Oscar' Slater



If you have a yen to know more about the Domain area, including the Royal Botanic Gardens, and enjoy walking, then this is the booklet for you!

Equipped with its clear maps and interesting commentary, you could walk the Domain area, all 120 hectares (300 acres), although probably not all on the one occasion. Along the way you will find out about the various markers and statues, important trees and interesting buildings, as well as the history of Melbourne.

This particular area of South Yarra certainly has an interesting and colourful past and reading this booklet, whether you are walking or not, tells you all about it. It brings home very vividly what we didn't learn at school about our history.

The booklet, being self-published, has a homey feel and could have done with more rigorous editing. However, as a useful and informative handbook it certainly fills the bill.

Terri Kay

Photo: Andrew Laidlaw





In Spring 2003, a pair of Willy Wagtails constructed their nest about a metre above the water in a Populus Alba on the west side of the Lake near the bridge. Visitors had an excellent view of the nest, the sitting on the eggs, the feeding of the young and their eventual fledging. Shortly after, the tree collapsed into the Lake.

Botanic Birds

The end of each year is a very special time for birds in the RBG, and their breeding success is probably a fair indication of the general health of the Gardens. Bird breeding in the RBG was again very successful in 2004, although perhaps not as prolific as in 2003. There were, however some interesting variations and additions worth noting.

The Kookaburras which have been more-or-less resident for the last year or more produced three offspring. They were very active around Long Island in the fledging stage, particularly when the young birds were learning to laugh.

A pair of Eastern Rosellas took up residence in the Gardens during 2004 and

successfully bred two young. The Rainbow Lorikeets and the Red-rumped Parrots also bred again in reasonable numbers.

There was good breeding activity amongst the ducks, especially the Black Duck, Hardhead and Chestnut Teal. One pair of Black Duck had a brood of nine chicks, and a pair of Chestnut Teal had eight chicks. The latter is unusual for the Gardens. Although a number of chicks did not survive the various predators, the end result was a healthy increase in numbers.

Large numbers of Little pied Cormorants (perhaps a hundred), and a few Little Black Cormorants, nested in the willows on Ridoutt Island. It was impossible to count the young birds. This seems to

have become an annual breeding event; obviously the conditions there are eminently suitable. The swan population again increased, with several sets of cygnets. The resident Purple Swamp Hens produced at least three chicks, and possibly a further two in an earlier breeding cycle.

A pair of Grey Butcherbirds built a nest in the Australian Rainforest Border opposite the Oak Lawn. It is thought that one chick eventually fledged.

At least ten other species of birds which normally breed in the Gardens did so again, and shortly before going to press the resident Goshawks were observed in a nuptial flight over Oak Lawn.

A pair of Sacred Kingfishers was present during the

breeding season, but it is not clear if they bred. This was also the case with a pair of White-faced Herons that spent a short time roosting in the Gardens.

One of the things that has become obvious is that there is a form of bird exchange between the RBG and Albert Park Lake. Tony lives half way between the two and sees constant bird movement, especially the ducks and, to a lesser extent, the swans, between the two locations.

Tony Delves / David Plant

Advance Notice

WINE AND ROSES IN THE BAROSSA VALLEY

Tuesday 15 November to Sunday 20 November.

Following the success of our Tasmanian Wine and Roses Tour, Merrylye Johnson of Country Farm Perennials, in consultation with the Friends, has designed a very special six-day tour to South Australia.

The Barossa Valley is an area with a fascinating past, a legacy of historic homes and gardens, and some beautiful contemporary gardens created from the prosperity of its famous vineyards.

We will stay five nights at Chateau Barossa - Lyndoch, set in its own garden of 20,000 roses over 12 ha. On our day trips to private gardens, historic homesteads, wine tastings, galleries and restaurants we will enjoy all the charms and attractions of the area. Touring will be in a luxury 5-star airconditioned coach.

Please phone the Friends office on 9650 6398 for further details.

FRIENDS BENEFITS BOTANIC NEWS

The Gardens Shops offer 10 per cent discount on all Members' purchases.

The following businesses kindly offer discounts to Friends on PRIOR presentation of their current membership cards, which are not transferable.

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 off 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
5% 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

Cultivate Nursery & Gifts

Rear 91-93 Doncaster Rd
North Balwyn.
10% off everything

The Arts Bookshop

1067 High St, Armadale
10% discount

Banksia Hill B & B

RMB 5349, Horsham, 3401
10% discount on accommodation

Feldspar at Trentham B&B

via Daylesford. Ph: 5424 1821
10% discount on accommodation

Killarney Cottage B&B Sorrento

Ph: 5989 2729. 10% discount
on 6-person self-catering
accommodation

Blackwood Lane Gallery

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

Botanical Creations

122 Grange Rd, Glenhuntly
Discount on monthly Garden
Club items
Landscape Design & Maintenance
Ph: 9859 3610 Michael Seeley
10% off garden consultations

Terrace Tea Rooms & Reception Centre RBGM

Complimentary tea or coffee with
meals, scones or cakes

Lister Teak Garden Furniture

22 Industry Court, Lilydale,
Ph: 9735 4010. Free 100-page
colour catalogue of Cotswold
Furniture Collection.
Ask for the Members' surprise

Cloudehill Nursery

89 Olinda-Monbulk Rd, Olinda
10% off all purchases

Patron

John Landy, AC, MBE,
Governor of Victoria

President

Irwin Newman

Vice-Presidents

Janet Thomson
Catherine Trinca

Secretary

Richard Smith

Treasurer

Maurice Castro

Immediate Past

President

The Rt Hon.
Sir Ninian Stephen

Council

Susan Brookes
John Hawker
Judy Jarman
Dr. Richard Kirsner
Dr. Philip Moors
David Plant
Anne Weber

Editor

Meg Miller

COMMITTEE CONVENERS

Activities, Catering and Events

Susan Brookes
Christine Harris

Botanical Illustrators

Edyta Hoxley

Growing Friends

Pamela Eames

Membership

Lorna Downey

Promotions/Publicity

Catherine Trinca

Volunteers

Janet Thomson

FRIENDS' OFFICE

Virginia Henderson
Helen Fahey
Jean Woodger
Gate Lodge
100 Birdwood Avenue
Melbourne Vic 3004
Tel: (03) 9650 6398
Fax: (03) 9650 7723

Email:

friends@rbgmelb.org.au

Website:

[www.rbg.vic.gov.au/
friends](http://www.rbg.vic.gov.au/friends)

Print Post Approved
PP 345842/10025
A12827T

ISSN 0817-0650

Printed on 50 per cent
recycled paper
Australian made

Printer

De Luxe Printing

ADVERTISING

DL and A4 inserts will
be accepted in Botanic
News at a rate of \$380
plus GST and \$450
plus GST respectively.
For ease of handling,
DL size is preferred.
Material advertised
should be of interest to
the membership of the
Friends of the RBG.
Contact the Friends'
office, 9650 6398,
for details



NEW MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

- ☐ **Household** \$57
(two adults living at same address)
- ☐ **Individual** \$39
- ☐ **Pensioner, Student, Country** \$28
- ☐ **Interstate or Overseas** \$30

Subscription rates are subject to annual review

Trust Fund DONATIONS

(Tax deductible, receipt issued)

\$

TOTAL ENCLOSED

\$

Cheque/Money order enclosed
OR please charge my

- ☐ Bankcard ☐ Mastercard ☐ Visa

NAME / AGE / SEX / MAR / OCC / EMP / RES / CTRY / POST / TEL / FAX / E-MAIL

Signature

Expiry Date

Please tell us about yourself (please print):

Name(s)

(Mr / Mrs / Miss / Ms / Dr)

Address

Postcode

Telephone: ()

Age Group

- ☐ Under 25 ☐ 25-39 ☐ 40-59 ☐ 60 and over

I would like details of:

- ☐ Gift membership ☐ Life Membership ☐ Bequests & Wills

Please make cheques payable to: Friends of RBG,
and post with this form to: Gate Lodge,
100 Birdwood Ave, Melbourne 3004



FRIENDS of the
ROYAL BOTANIC GARDENS
MELBOURNE INC.

We invite you to join the Friends and help us grow (see adjoining application form). Subscribing Friends support the work of the National Herbarium and the Royal Botanic Gardens, Melbourne. Benefits include:

Discounts on purchases from

The Gardens' Shops
Terrace Tearooms
Selected B&Bs
Specialty Bookshops and Gallery
Selected Nurseries

Growing Friends Nursery

Open to Members only on most Fridays
Advance notice of sale dates and Terrific Temptations

Volunteers

are always welcome.
Contact Gate Lodge for details

Members Activities

Learn about gardens, gardening, botany, horticulture and Botanical Photography.
Attend talks, lectures, behind-the-scenes visits, guided walks, social events, day trips and extended tours.

Botanical Illustrators

Beginners, Intermediate and Advanced classes available

