

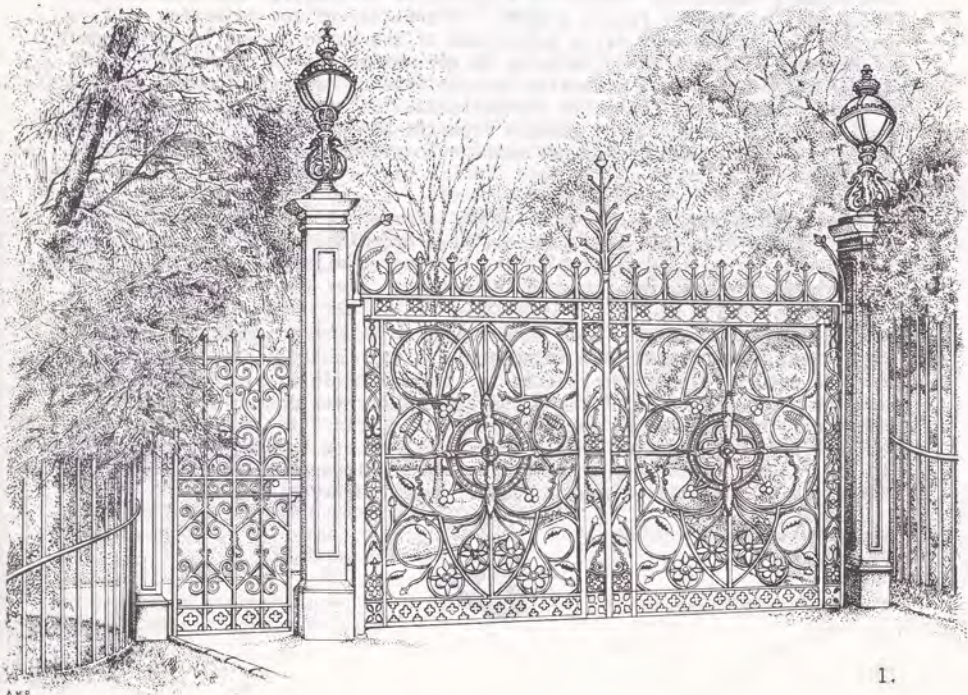
# *Friends of the Royal Botanic Gardens, Melbourne*

Number 8, May 1984

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## FROM THE DIRECTOR ...

I hope all our Friends had an opportunity to visit the Herbarium during Heritage Week and to see the fine exhibition of botanical treasures displaying all facets of the work carried out in the Herbarium. Credit goes to Eve Almond and Marion van Gameren for inspiring all the staff to provide the displays. We were pleased to welcome David Yencken past Chairman of the Australian Heritage Commission and presently Director of Planning who opened the Heritage Display.



During the week many visitors took the opportunity to walk with our Voluntary Guides on their newly launched Heritage Walk, Aboriginal Resources Walk and Natural Dye Walk.

Our energetic Minister, Rod McKenzie, has ably convinced his Parliamentary colleagues that we need new facilities. Recently whilst on a tour of inspection in the old ecology quarters, one of the group came face to face with some of our abundant wildlife when his foot went through the floor. Whereas some computers are bugged, ours are possumed!

David Churchill  
Director and Government Botanist

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### FROM THE PRESIDENT ...

Members will be pleased to note as reported elsewhere in this newsletter that your elected committee, plus volunteers have organised an active calendar of events for 1984. The program is designed, hopefully to be of interest to all members and through to our Christmas function late November will see at least one major event scheduled each month. The Friends continue to work in close co-operation with other groups providing support for our Gardens, including the Maude Gibson Trust, the Plant Craft Cottage Group, and the Volunteer Guides. Links are also maintained with Friends of other Botanic Gardens around Australia, as well as worldwide. Committee member Golda Isaac attended the March meeting of the Australian Federation of Friends of Galleries and Museums representing the Friends and Golda's report has identified a number of initiatives and opportunities which will assist our future growth. Information of our operation will be provided to the July Paris Convention of the World Federation of Friends of Museums. It is planned to relay to our membership as information comes to hand of developments occurring through Friends groups supporting Botanical Gardens elsewhere in Australia and overseas. It is hoped that four groups will visit our Gardens, for example from the USA next year, and of course reciprocal opportunities for our members to visit overseas gardens will be sought.

Our membership continues to grow and it is expected with the creation of a trust fund later this year that business organisations and individuals will be attracted to assisting in the funding of major projects, so maintaining the momentum achieved through the 'Save the Lake' campaign.

The support of members is most encouraging - so much so that your elected committee, supplemented with volunteers, is both enthusiastic and optimistic for the future role of the Friends in stimulating interest in the Gardens and the provision of support and assistance wherever possible. Members ideas will be welcomed by the committee as to activities and projects you believe your organisation should address, so please forward your ideas to the Friends of the Royal Botanic Gardens, Melbourne, C/- National Herbarium of Victoria, Birdwood Avenue, South Yarra, 3141.

Frank Phillips  
President



## WINTER ACTIVITIES

### FROM HORSES TO COMPUTERS - Farewell to Allan Gardiner

Allan Gardiner, the Garden's Horticultural Adviser, will be the Friends' guest-of-honour on Tuesday, 26th June at 8.00 p.m. in the Herbarium Auditorium. Allan (who is also well known through his Saturday morning gardening program on 3LO) is retiring from the Gardens in July after 35 years service. His reminiscences are not to be missed! An opportunity to thank Allan for his invaluable support to the Friends. Supper will be served.



R.S.V.P. : 22nd June  
Joan Nesbit : 211 8979

Tickets : \$2.00 Members  
: \$3.00 Non-Members

### THE NATIVE GARDEN - Guest speaker and luncheon

Monday, 9th July promises two more fascinating speakers in Rodger and Gwen Elliot. The Elliots founded one of Victoria's major nurseries specialising in Australian flora. Currently they operate a whole-sale propagation nursery in Montrose. Rodger is the regular writer on Australian plants for *Your Garden* magazine and co author of the new *Encyclopaedia of Australian plants suitable for cultivation*. A joint venture with the Voluntary Guides Group, starting at 10.30 a.m. in the Herbarium Auditorium. A light luncheon will follow.

R.S.V.P. : 2nd July  
Sue Higgs : 266 1838

Tickets : \$3.00 Members  
: \$4.00 Non-Members

### WHAT ARE FRIENDS FOR? - Early evening gathering

Professor Tony Eddison, Director-General, Department of Conservation, Forests and Lands will be the guest speaker at a wine-and-cheese get-together on Wednesday, 18th July at 5.30 p.m. in the Astronomer's Residence. If the title of the talk is any indication, this should be a most provocative evening.

R.S.V.P. : 13th July  
Sue Higgs : 266 1838

Tickets : \$3.00 Members  
: \$4.00 Non-Members

### AUSTRALIAN FLORA AND THE EARLY GERMAN BOTANISTS - Early evening gathering

Guest speaker on Thursday, 9th August at 5.30 p.m. in the Astronomer's Residence will be Dr. Sophie Ducker, former Reader and now Senior Associate in the Botany School, University of Melbourne. Dr. Ducker's primary research was with marine plants but more recently she has been investigating the history of botany, particularly in Australia. Her talk should be most interesting. Wine and cheese served.

R.S.V.P. : 3rd August  
Joan Nesbit : 211 8979

Tickets : \$3.00 Members  
: \$4.00 Non-Members

## THE BOTANICAL BARON - Guest speaker and luncheon

Dr. David Churchill, Director of the Gardens and Government Botanist will speak on his most famous predecessor, Baron Ferdinand von Mueller, on Monday, 10th September at 10.30 a.m. in the Herbarium Auditorium. Following the talk, luncheon will be served. A joint venture with the Voluntary Guides Group.

R.S.V.P. : 3rd September  
Joan Nesbit : 211 8979

Tickets : \$4.00 Members  
: \$5.00 Non-Members



## REMINISCING WITH ALLAN GARDINER

The young Allan Gardiner, at the tender age of ten, was given the choice of spending half a day each week at either carpentry or horticulture. As we know, he chose horticulture, a decision that was to see him ultimately reach a position of Horticultural Advisor at the Royal Botanic Gardens, Melbourne, with a career in the Gardens spanning 36 years. As Allan says: 'Not many at the age of ten are able to choose a career which pays them for their entire working life to do what they like doing above all else!'

Allan started work in 1937 at Idaho Nursery (a seedling nursery only in those days) where he received an excellent grounding, not only in the rudiments of his chosen profession, but also in learning how to apply himself to work, and in the proper care and maintenance of his tools of trade. He had a hard task-master, and is still grateful for the lessons so learned and still practised. Rates of pay have changed somewhat since then, Allan receiving the magnificent sum of 1½d. for 'pricking out' boxes of 108 seedlings each, and averaging 8 boxes an hour. And these were overtime rates! Allan had several brief stints at landscape gardening prior to and following his Air Force service between the years 1942 to 1946. On discharge he joined the Commonwealth Reconstruction Training School at Burnley where he received a thorough grounding in the theory of horticulture, botany, propagation and general floriculture.



On 18th March 1948, Allan accepted a position with the Royal Botanic Gardens as a gardener Grade III (assistant Gardener). He progressed through Grades II and I to become Assistant Propagator and Nurseryman, then Propagator and Nurseryman, and, finally, Superintendent in 1959. Several years ago the rules were bent to allow Allan to be classified as Horticultural Advisor, a position which will lapse on his retirement.

Allan's main role in the last seven or eight years has covered planning and planting in the Gardens and in the Cranbourne Annex. He was closely involved with the launching of the Gardens' brochures, an idea which snow-balled to see the emergence of guided tours and a quantity of relevant information

readily available to lovers of the Gardens. He is involved, with others, in the horticultural advisory service available to the public. Allan never forgets the name of a plant (although prone, he says, to forgetting the names of people), and derives enormous satisfaction from having been in a position where he was able to furnish information for a computer listing of all the plants in the Royal Botanic Gardens, information that would not otherwise have been in the possession of the Gardens and which has provided invaluable records for the future.

Allan has witnessed many changes at the Gardens throughout the years from what were quite literally horse and buggy days to the highly mechanised methods in use today. Initially the mechanised equipment comprised a horse-drawn 3-gang mower, 2 motor mowers, a truck and a dray, plus a 70 ft. fireman's ladder which had to be physically man-handled. Today the Gardens are completely mechanised in the modern manner and any equipment they don't possess - such as travel-towers, stump removers, concrete tampers - is hired. Mind you, people still weed, sweep, prune, and water our lovely Gardens by hand - nowadays this includes female gardeners too. About ten years ago Allan was instrumental in engaging Miss Vivian Young, - as an apprentice gardener - the first ever female member of the Gardens staff. It was a quite momentous decision for those days and a source of wonder to many old-timers. There wasn't a pair of overalls small enough for this new member, nor were any facilities available for female employees. However, this was gradually rectified with Vivian providing the catalyst for the subsequent changes.

Allan sees vast differences in the standard of maintenance since his commencement with the Gardens, when money and labour for aesthetic activities were largely unavailable due to the effects of the Depression and the ensuing war years. He says it has been a long and gradual process from those days to bring the Gardens up to the standard where they are now classed as one of the top landscaped gardens of the world. His one regret is that at apprenticeship level there is now a tendency for specialisation, with horticultural students following specific spheres such as propagation, nursery, landscaping or turf, and students may not have the opportunity to acquire all-round experience as did Allan and his contemporaries.

While speaking with Allan, my eye was caught by a pristine collection of beautifully engraved shovels, large and small, a most interesting collection, inscribed with the names of our Queen and Prince Phillip among other notables. Another small, but satisfying job for Allan has been to arrange the plantings of trees by visiting dignitaries, with all the attendant ritual involved.

Quite apart from this involvement with the Gardens, Allan has been a very busy man in the whole horticultural field over many years, lecturing to societies, garden clubs, and judging flower shows. He has been a speaker at the Royal Horticultural Society monthly meetings for a period of 20 years and still does this, each month selecting and discussing about 10 plants in flower in the Gardens at that time.

As many are aware, Allan is a member of the ABC Gardening Talk-Back panel featured on 3LO each Saturday at 8.00 a.m. At present he is also very actively involved in surveys in Macedon Gardens, and is assisting in the compilation of a list of plants now growing in that area. In addition to

all this Allan was a part-time instructor at Oakleigh Technical School for a period of ten years, up-dating adult apprenticeship skills to today's requirements in the horticultural trades. He only relinquished this when the hours were extended and became too arduous.

With all these extra-curricular activities, Allan still found time for his favourite hobbies of angling, football, and, latterly lawn bowls. In addition to which he had an extensive home garden growing everything from fruit trees to cactus. Last year Allan and his wife moved into a unit (complete with a garden, naturally), and he now has the pleasure of pottering in a much smaller acreage, a marvellous strip garden, where he can concentrate on all kinds of gorgeous plants and shrubs, and with climbers already decorating the available fence area. Despite Allan's extensive knowledge of horticultural matters everyone in the family is permitted their democratic right of choice in plants - a lesson here surely for less accomodating spouses!

And is he exhausted and toil-worn by this tireless round of activities over many long years? Not at all. On the eve of retirement, on 20th July 1984, Allan's eye still has a very merry twinkle, he looks energetic and vital and ready for anything the world has to offer. His expertise and knowledge will continue to be available, as he intends remaining active in the horticultural sphere for many years to come. We thank Allan for all he has done to help make our Botanic Gardens the beautiful place they are today, and extend our best wishes both to himself and his family for the very best life can provide them in the years to come.

Joan Nesbit

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## EARLY WINTER IN THE GARDENS

With the unusually fine, mild days during May, the Gardens have been crowded with family parties. The magnificent *Liquidambar styraciflua*, on the Western Lawn coloured well and its autumn foliage was a delight to the children who also enjoyed playing in the fallen leaves on the Oak Lawn.

Many of the camellias in the main Camellia Bed on the bottom of the Oak Lawn are already in flower. For a complete contrast, do also visit the Protea Bed, adjacent to the Camellia Bed. Several proteas and banksias, including *Banksia integrifolia* and *B. serrata* are in flower. The handsome Hairpin Banksia, *Banksia spinulosa*, near the Nursery-Yard entrance on the Australian Border also bears striking flower spikes. Among the early wattles coming into bloom now are *Acacia iteaphylla*, Gawler Range Wattle, on the Australian Border near 'F' gate lodge and *A. podalyriifolia*, Mt. Morgan Wattle in the small bed near 'F' gate. Over the ensuing winter months the Australian Border will come alive with colour and perfumes as the native plants flower.

## 'A TIME TO PLANT, AND A TIME TO PLUCK' (Ecclesiastes)

### Native Plants at Risk - Part III

*(Parts I and II were published in the Friends' publication no. 6, November 1983 and no. 7, March 1984 respectively.)*

#### Introduction

Since 1978, botanists at the La Trobe University Botany Department have been compiling a register of rare and threatened native plant species in Victoria. The work began with aid of a grant from the Potter Foundation, and from 1979 onwards has been supported by grants from the National Estate Program of the Department of Home Affairs and Environment.

The aim is to locate, map and assess the current condition of populations of species known or suspected to be either under threat of extinction or extremely rare in Victoria. We want to move from the 'inventory' stage of knowledge to the point where action can be taken to maintain threatened populations and rare species can be kept under observation. While Victorian plant species currently listed as rare or threatened on a nation-wide basis (Leigh, Briggs and Hartley, 1981) have been the main priority, many species known to be very rare in Victoria (less than three known localities) have also been surveyed.

When any species is selected for field checking, all available details on known or 'possible' locations are collated, primarily from the collections of the National Herbarium of Victoria, but also from the published and unpublished data of botanical field workers. Detailed data for every definable stand which can be located are filed on a standard 'Details' form, including location details, size of stand, habitat, threats to the stand, etc.. When all locations possible have been checked, a state-wide 'Summary' form is completed. This summary includes a classification of the species in terms of the International Union for the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (IUCN) Red Data Book categories which indicate the degree of threat to individual species, and thus give an indication of the urgency for action to preserve the species. These categories are as follows:-

#### Extinct (Ex)

Taxa which are no longer known to exist in the wild after repeated searches of the type localities and other known or likely places. As interpreted by the IUCN, this includes species that are extinct in the wild but are surviving in cultivation.

#### Endangered (E)

Taxa in danger of extinction and whose survival is unlikely if the causal factors continue operating. Included are taxa whose numbers have been reduced to a critical level or whose habitats have been so drastically reduced that they are deemed to be in immediate danger of extinction.

#### Vulnerable (V)

Taxa believed likely to move to the Endangered category in the near future if the causal factors continue operating. Included are taxa of which most or all of the populations are decreasing because of over-exploitation, extensive destruction of habitat or other environmental disturbance; taxa

with populations that have been seriously depleted and whose ultimate security is not yet assured; and taxa with populations that are still abundant but are under threat from serious adverse factors throughout their range.

#### Rare (R)

Taxa with small populations that are not at present Endangered or Vulnerable, but are at risk. These taxa are usually localized within restricted geographical areas or habitats or are thinly scattered over a more extensive range.

#### Poorly Known (K)

Taxa which are suspected, but not definitely known to belong to any of the categories listed above. Accurate data on field distribution is currently inadequate.

Copies of the register including recommendations for action are forwarded to the Government land management agencies, Shire Councils, semi-government bodies and, sometimes, private land owners who control the areas where the species is located. In cases where a species is, or may be subjected to the attacks of unscrupulous plant fanciers, localities are provided only in the strictest confidence and are not made freely available.

The approach outlined owes much to the pioneering work of Dr. David Given in New Zealand (1979).

#### The role of Botanic Gardens

The conservation of rare or threatened species in their natural (or semi-natural!) habitats is the primary consideration when recommending conservation measures. In fact, for the majority of species in the rare or vulnerable category, measures such as land reservation and provision for a species in management plans can be perfectly adequate. However, for many species, mainly in the endangered category, 'on-site' (a gloss for the Latin *in situ*) conservation is either extremely difficult to achieve, of dubious effectiveness, or both. These are mainly species of long-settled and relatively intensely developed areas which survive in tiny remnant patches of native vegetation. For instance, the endangered 'button-daisy' *Rutidosia leptorrhynchoides* survives in Victoria in only 6 stands, mainly on railway reserves on the Keilor-Werribee Plains west of Melbourne. While efforts are continuing to ensure that the surviving stands are properly reserved and managed, the situation of the species remains, and will remain, extremely insecure. Seed collection, propagation and the establishment of populations in Botanic Gardens and in secure biological reserve areas (*ex-situ* measures) must also be part of the effort to retain this attractive and interesting species.

Similarly the spectacular red-flowered pea, *Swainsona plagiotropis*, now surviving only in scattered road and rail reserves on the Campaspe Plains north of Bendigo, requires propagation and cultivation for an assured future. Moreover, it is a member of an Australian genus horticulturally neglected.

Habitat protection and special measures in the field must be combined with propagation and cultivation as complementary aspects of a conservation program. The particular emphasis depends on the actual situation of a

particular species, and may change with the complex ebb and flow of negotiation and trade-offs in the rather harsh world of 'conservation politics'. For instance, when efforts to force a change in the site chosen for the Alcoa of Australia smelter at Portland failed, cultivation, propagation and re-establishment were the only remaining possible measures to save the endangered orchid *Caladenia hastata* (Carr, 1980).

Similarly, because of the well-known insecurity of native vegetation on rail-reserves, seed collection and propagation were the first concerns after the discovery of six plants of the 'extinct' species *Lepidium hyssopifolium* in late 1983. The excruciatingly slow negotiations concerning reservation of such sites must inevitably follow, but the time-factor alone dictates immediate action for propagation and cultivation. At present, there is more *Lepidium hyssopifolium* in cultivation than in its re-discovered natural location.

The storage of seed in the National Botanic Gardens seedbank is always part of the conservation strategy for endangered species where *in-situ* conservation is uncertain.

#### Progress on the rare and threatened species register

To date, over 200 Victorian plant species have been surveyed for the register of rare and threatened species. Naturally, some species proved to be too widespread and abundant for inclusion, since suspected rarity is usually the only criteria for inclusion in lists of rare or threatened species. Nevertheless, about 110 species have been included in the register, an indication of the size of the problem. The most exciting result of the continuing survey work in the field in 1983-84 was the re-discovery of species long believed to be extinct in Victoria: the tiny annual Crucifer (Cress) *Ballantinia antipoda*; the annual Composites (daisies) *Epaltes tatei* and *Gnephosis baracchiana*; the tall 'fireweed' *Senecio laticostatus*, formerly known only from the single 'type' collection in 1856; and the peppergrass *Lepidium hyssopifolium* mentioned above. It is hoped that many more of such species will 're-appear' in the future.

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#### References

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- Given, D. (1979). 'Threatened New Zealand Plants' *New Zealand environment* 24 : 4-9.
- Neville Scarlett  
LaTrobe University Botany Department

## FRIENDS INFORMATION DESK AT THE KIOSK

Well done, all those Friends who cheerfully manned the weekend Information Desk at the Kiosk from November through to May! Total sales amounted to \$1,750. With more than \$900 being raised during Heritage Week in the Herbarium, the total taking on behalf of the Gardens by Friends is well over \$2,500. Of course the value of the Information Desk is also in the service provided to the countless number of visitors who stopped and chatted to the Friends, requesting directions and general information.

The Information Desk will resume in October and more volunteers are needed to staff it. If you are interested in spending a couple of hours in the Gardens at weekends, every month or so, please do contact Brenda Owen, ph: 560 4414. There will be a training session on Thursday, 20th September, 10.00 a.m. in the Astronomer's Residence for all volunteers, old and new. The session will cover the main features in the Gardens and will try to provide answers to those questions which are frequently asked by visitors.

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## HELP REQUIRED

Volunteers are also needed to assist the catering sub-committee, secretary (anybody able to help with typing?), treasurer, publicity officer and activities sub-committee. Please contact Beth Higgs, ph: 850 5908 if you are able to help.

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## CRANBOURNE ANNEX PROGRESS REPORT

Work at Cranbourne, the Garden's Australian native annex, recently received a boost when five assistant gardeners were appointed under the Commonwealth Employment Program (C.E.P.). Much of the development area has had the regenerating vegetation cut back to ground level and the surface irregularities smoothed out to make further equipment use easier. Of course the natural vegetation will quickly grow up again. Excavation of the main lake is continuing and a start has been made on marking out the areas for planting of trees and massed shrubs. Several planting days have already been held for the current season.

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## WE ARE WELCOME TO ATTEND ...

A cordial invitation is extended to Friends to attend a Plant Craft Cottage exhibition to be held at the Herbarium on Saturday, 21st and Sunday, 22nd July. The various groups allied to the Plant Craft Cottage will display and demonstrate their various crafts, including basket weaving, dyeing of wool, braid making, and a talk on methods of paper-making. The display will be open between 11.00 a.m. and 3.30 p.m.; admission is free. Guides will be on hand to escort visitors to the Cottage and to show people around the Gardens.

## A 'POCKETT' FULL OF CHRYSANTHEMUMS

Chrysanthemums we associate with Mother's Day, and while the beauty of these flowers is uppermost in our minds we have included a little of their history in Victoria which we hope you will also enjoy.

Do you remember the grand old man of the chrysanthemums affectionately known as 'The Chrissy King'? Thomas W. Pockett, O.B.E. spent a lifetime amongst chrysanthemums, dying at Healesville, Victoria on 1 November, 1952 at the age of 95.

Pockett's pioneering work and his contribution to horticulture are part of our national heritage for which we can be truly proud. They have special relevance to Victorians, especially those of us who are familiar with the now inner suburb of Malvern, for we can look back and relate to the happenings of yesteryear.

### EARLY YEARS 1857-1900

Born at Cheltenham England on 11 February 1857, Thomas left school at 10 or 11 to work in a nursery. At 18 he became plantsman to Lord Falmouth; at 19 he won his first prize for chrysanthemums at Cheltenham; at 20 he became foreman gardener to Mr. J.A. Elwes of Collesbourne Park and at 21 he married Louisa Baylis. Shortly afterwards the Pocketts migrated to Australia and in 1878, after an expensive and disappointing 6 months on the River Murray, they returned to Melbourne with only 12/6d. Chrysanthemums had to wait until 1882. As head gardener to T.K. Scott of 'Kenley' Toorak, Vic., Thomas was given every encouragement with plant growing, 'Kenley' gaining for him a first class award for the best kept gentleman's garden within 5 miles of the Melbourne G.P.O. By 1884 Thomas was displaying chrysanthemums both as individual blooms and as specimen plants in pots at the Victorian Horticultural Improvement Society's Hall in Melbourne. *The Leader* 10 May, 1884 said of the show '.... we question if finer flowers than those staged by Mr. Pockett could be seen anywhere ... Mr. Pockett's single flowers were evidently grown by one who is a complete master of the business, nothing in the show coming near them in size'.

In 1886, after recovering from a severe attack of typhoid fever, Thomas purchased land in Malvern Road, Malvern, Vic. and built his home 'Hatherley'. Later about

Caricature by  
Norm Walder,  
Healesville.





one and a half acres of land were purchased in the vicinity and together with the original home-site was used for raising thousands of chrysanthemum seedlings.

After Thomas relinquished his position as head gardener at 'Kenley' in 1888, members of the Malvern Shire Council approached him to prepare a plan of a sandy barren waste for a municipal garden. This he did, and was appointed Curator of the Malvern Public Gardens. In his spare time, with the assistance of a glasshouse, Thomas concentrated on raising seedling chrysanthemums. We know he was keenly interested in growing specimen chrysanthemums up until 1896 when the first Malvern Chrysanthemum Show was held.

At about this time a Chrysanthemum Society was formed, probably in 1894 under the direction of Ernest Carter. However, not until 1896 did a representative meeting of chrysanthemum growers take place when on 5 September it was resolved to form a society to be known as the Chrysanthemum Society of Victoria. Pockett served on the committee which developed rules for the Society. Interestingly this same year Pockett predicted that Australia would eventually contribute and probably lead in some of the best varieties in the world. Two years later his 'Nellie Pockett' and 'John Pockett' varieties did well in England and on the Continent especially 'Nellie Pockett'. This variety was competing keenly with 'Madam Carnet' which at this time was one of the best exhibition whites in England and Australia.

The 'Madam Carnet' variety was raised by Calvert the great French authority on chrysanthemums. W. Wells, of Merstham, Surrey, England distributed Calvert's varieties and was instrumental in sending out Pockett varieties. In 1899-1900 Wells distributed a special list of chrysanthemums known as the Wells-Pockett set of novelties which included 10 varieties, 8 of which were Pockett's.

#### LATER YEARS 1901-1952

In 1901 Thomas returned to England for 6 months by which time his varieties had achieved great success in England and on the Continent. Accompanied by Wells they visited leading chrysanthemum shows in England, Scotland and Paris. He returned to Australia fired with new enthusiasm to improve on his raising of seedlings.

One of the early experiments conducted by Thomas was with the 'Syringa' variety from which he saved seed. He thought that plants raised from self-fertilised seed would give an idea of the possible type of progeny and the range of colour that could be obtained. The first of these seedlings produced a large number of pinks, dirty whites and pale yellows. However, a few years later 'Syringa' sported white and yellow. As a result of this and other experiments Thomas concluded that whatever colours developed from self-fertilised seedlings would be a guide when crossing.

In the study of the *Chrysanthemum* the work undertaken by Thomas and his family was enormous. Each season 3,000 to 5,000 chrysanthemum seedlings were planted out after the seed was germinated in the Spring and picked off from the seed boxes into 3 in. to 3 1/2 in. pots, 2 to 5 around each pot and then repotted singly into the same size pots. When established in pots the seedlings would be planted in the open fairly close together and in rows about 4 ft. apart. Each plant would be staked and tied and supported to strained wires. From 5,000 seedlings about 200 were saved and these would then have to undergo a second season's trial, at the end of which about 12 would be selected as choice varieties and the remainder disposed as rubbish.

Thomas raised and distributed numerous chrysanthemum varieties but some are worthy of special mention. In 1901 the following received Awards of Merit by the Royal Horticultural Society of England: 'Glorious', 'Khaki', 'Lord Ludlow', 'W.R. Church', 'C.T. Salter', 'Matthew Smith' and 'Loveliness'. In 1903 and 1904 the 'W.R. Church Pockett' variety was declared the champion of a selection of the best 50 chrysanthemums in cultivation made by the most noted growers and exhibitors in Great Britain. Also in 1901, but in Australia, a yellow seedling referred to in the press as being probably the finest chrysanthemum ever seen in Melbourne and named 'Mrs. T.W. Pockett', was awarded the Wells' gold medal. Later seasons saw Pockett varieties win this coveted award: 'J.H. Doyle', 'Miss Mary Seddon', 'Mrs. John E. Dunne' and 'Mrs. Wm. Knox'. In particular 'Mrs. Wm. Knox', a rich yellow reflex with a trace of bronze was to become an outstanding success and exhibition variety.

In 1907 Mr. Chas H. Totty, an American, read before the Boston Gardeners' and Florists' Club a paper in praise of Australian chrysanthemums '.... we find that the Australian varieties in the past few years have swept our exhibition tables clear of the older varieties, giving us flowers of such splendid size and colours combined with ideal habit, that there would almost seem to be an infusion of new blood into the race.'

Totty gave many reasons why the Australian varieties were proving so successful in America including the similar climate at flowering time.

To create new varieties Thomas undertook experimental work. He observed that if pollen to be artificially applied is collected when a change in the weather is approaching 'there is generally an ample supply of pollen, and of better quality than under normal conditions. If electrical disturbances are impending, there is still greater quantity.' Thomas found it impossible to obtain a rich yellow bloom from a yellow variety; this was only obtained by crossing bronze and crimson varieties. Thomas advanced to a stage with hybridisation which made the results of the cross-fertilization of chrysanthemums immediate and predicable. It is interesting to note that seed was sown in Spring, precisely 10 days before the full moon, this being considered the best time.





When viewing some of the main collections of chrysanthemum plants in England in 1901 it was necessary to take a light pair of steps in order to examine the blooms. Most of the varieties were 10 to 11 feet high but these were soon displaced by the Pockett strain, 3 to 4 feet high and carrying superior blooms.

In 1912 Thomas visited England again to meet with Wells, and Totty who was visiting from America, to discuss their common interest chrysanthemums. On returning home Thomas set his mind to continuing to raise new varieties.

By 1913 where once there were open fields surrounding the Pockett home in Malvern Road, land was being subdivided, houses being erected, and property values increasing. The Pocketts sold this property and unable to gain possession of their Manning Road property moved to Ash Grove in close proximity. In 1915 at Ash Grove the *Chrysanthemum* 'Louise Pockett' was first tested as a seedling. The blooms were the largest to date and promised to become the finest white in existence. Two years later the Pocketts moved to their Manning Road property which was readily accessible to their temporary glasshouse. However, Thomas and his wife wanted a complete change. In April 1918 they bought a property in Healesville 'Sans Souci' and Thomas relinquished his post as Curator of the Malvern Parks and Gardens, where he worked for 31 years and is said to have planted during that time 35 miles of street trees. 'Sans Souci' was soon transformed into a thriving chrysanthemum garden. By 1924 it was time for Thomas and Louisa to visit England again. In 1928 'The Melba' variety was named after Dame Melba, who visited 'Sans Souci' and chose this variety. It was a true cream sport of the popular 'Louisa Pockett'. In 1930 the Cowley nurserys in Healsville owned by Thomas and Louisa's son John, undertook to test new varieties and seedlings and later to distribute Pockett varieties. Thomas was greatly saddened in 1934 when his wife died.

Thomas was 87 in 1945. He was still fairly active and able to concentrate on various topics of horticulture. In the 1945 New Year honour list Thomas was awarded the O.B.E. by King George VI for his horticultural work. During this same year to mark the award of the O.B.E., the Malvern Horticultural Society, of which Thomas was a foundation member, bestowed upon him a Life Governor's Certificate. The 1950 Malvern Horticultural Society's Chrysanthemum Show was the last Thomas was to attend. Two years later this great King of the Chrysanthemums life came to a close. Thomas will be remembered for his remarkable contribution to this specialist area of horticulture.

Acknowledgements. I would like to thank Mr. Alan Byrne for his assistance, Mrs. Elvena Orange for information supplied and to the work of Mr. John B. Pockett in compiling facts about his father, Thomas Pockett.

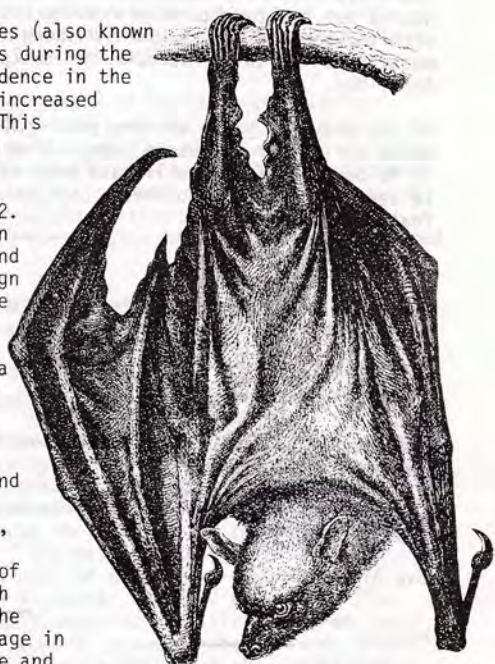
Dianna McClellan



## THE BATS ARE BACK!

About a dozen grey-headed flying foxes (also known as fruit-bats) arrived in the Gardens during the first week in April and took up residence in the Fern Gully. Their numbers steadily increased to about 100 during April and May. This species, *Pteropus poliocephalus*, had previously visited the Gardens from eastern and central New South Wales and Queensland in March 1981 and 1982. On both occasions they had settled on the islands in the Ornamental Lake and around its margins. There was no sign of them last year, presumably because of the severe drought.

During the day the flying-foxes are a remarkable sight (and sound) hanging upside down in the trees, twisting and turning with their wings folded about their bodies. On warmer sunny days they wave one languid wing around to fan themselves. Their endless chattering, squawking and squabbling, particularly if disturbed, can be deafening. (Unlike smaller species of bats, flying foxes do not have a high pitched sonar navigation system.) The flying-foxes take off at dusk to forage in gardens and parklands for ripe native and cultivated fruit and blossom. Their favourite



foods in Melbourne

appear to be Moreton Bay and cultivated figs. They can fly 50 km or more in a night's feeding.

The biology of these mammals is fascinating. In spring, when most females are pregnant, the flying foxes begin to form summer camps in patches of rainforests in Queensland and New South Wales. Usually the young are born in October after a six month gestation period. The female gives birth to one infant while hanging upside down from a branch (no mean feat!). The infant is equipped with an extra pair of claws to help it hold onto the mother's fur; these drop off at three months. At first the infant is carried clinging to its mother's breast when she flies out for the night's foraging. When the youngster becomes too heavy, it is left behind in the camp. The juveniles become independent of their mothers by the end of December and, following this, the females begin re-associating with the males who have been arriving in the camps in increasing numbers. The peak population in the summer camps occurs in December and January. Up to 250,000 bats have been recorded in one colony - that is a density of 20,000 animals to the acre (0.4 ha.).

In March and April, the summer camps disperse with the more adventurous adults spreading out through the forests and woodlands as far south as east Gippsland.

There are both male and female flying foxes in the Fern Gully. The male stakes out his territory by rubbing the branches in the roosting trees with the back of his neck where there is a scent-producing gland. This musty smell is quite overpowering in large colonies. Mating takes place April-May.

If the previous years are any guide, the flying foxes will probably head north for warmer climes in June. Also by then, their major food supply in Melbourne - figs - will have been exhausted. It will be interesting to see whether their southern sojourn will become a regular autumn feature in the Gardens.

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Eve Almond

Ring-tail Possum with young

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### OTHER GARDEN INHABITANTS

Two other native mammals live in the Gardens full-time. It is hard to estimate the numbers of the first - the common or Brush-tail Possum, *Trichosurus vulpecular*, but they certainly reach plague proportions at times! In the wild, this possum is a fairly sedentary and solitary animal with males and females having discrete territories. It has been found that females occupy about a hectare while males occupy up to three hectares; male territories overlap with those of several females. Of course in an artificial environment, such as the Botanic Gardens, where there is an abundant food supply all year round, the situation is quite different. Naturally, possums eat eucalyptus leaves, blossoms and fruits but they quickly adapt to such continental delicacies as chestnuts, beechnuts and young oak leaves. They are also well experienced in removing rubbish bin lids.



Brush-tails are about the size of a cat and their colour varies from black to grey. The distinguishing features are the large ears, prominent pink nose and pink finger-like tips to the tail. They usually nest in hollow trees (or, given half a chance, in roofs of buildings). The *Caltis occidentalis*, Nettle Tree, on the Oak Lawn and the Separation Tree seem favoured homes at the moment.

The second native mammal, the Ring-tail Possum, *Pseudocheirus peregrinus*, occurs in smaller numbers in the Gardens. This brownish-grey animal is easily distinguished by its lighter-tipped, strongly prehensile tail which is important in balancing. The animal's activities centre around its large untidy nest of twigs and leaves built in dense foliage, mistletoe or in a hollow spout or stump. They live in pairs or family groups; usually the female produces young two at a time. In Melbourne the breeding season is over winter. Like Brush-tail Possums, Ring-tails are nocturnal, feeding on leaves and fruits. They seem to be much shyer than the Brush-tails and not so easily seen in the Gardens.

As with other parklands in inner-city areas, the Botanic Gardens also has its fair share of rodents, both Black and Brown Rats, Field and House Mice, rabbits, stray cats and the occasional fox. (Mrs. D. Churchill is now an authority on foxes under residences!) From time to time, irresponsible people dump unwanted animals in the Gardens. Once caught, these animals are disposed of as humanely as possible.

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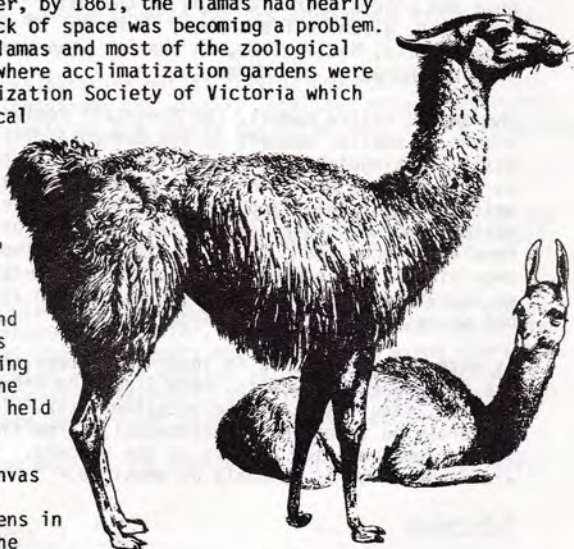
Eye Almond

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#### NIGHTINGALES IN THE FERN GULLY

In the early days, the link between zoological and botanical collections in the Botanic Gardens was very strong. Dr. Ferdinand Mueller, the first Government Botanist and later Director of the Gardens was particularly interested in the establishment of useful and ornamental animals and birds in the infant colony as well as in the acclimatization of plants of economic and ornamental value. In 1857 Mueller was given charge of the live collections of the newly formed Zoological Society of Victoria which were housed in Richmond Park opposite the Gardens. He soon introduced aviaries and an animal enclosure into the Gardens themselves - in the vicinity of what is now the lower Fern Gully and bottom of the Princes' Lawn. The aviaries housed European song birds (among other exotics); the idea was to breed sufficient numbers for eventual release into the 'savage silence' of the Australian bush. Records show that nightingales were actually liberated in the Gardens in 1857: thrushes, blackbirds, starlings and skylarks were released two years later.

The title of the Gardens was changed to 'Botanical and Zoological Gardens' in 1859. That year also saw the establishment of an alpaca-llama flock in the Gardens. However, by 1861, the llamas had nearly doubled their numbers and lack of space was becoming a problem. It was decided to move the llamas and most of the zoological collection out to Royal Park where acclimatization gardens were being set up by the Acclimatization Society of Victoria which by then included the Zoological Society. (The society was renamed the Zoological and Acclimatization Society in 1872.) At the same time (1861) the word 'zoological' was dropped from the Gardens' title.



A small remnant of animals and birds remained in the Gardens with the main aviary continuing to be a major attraction. The two photographs and a sketch held by the Gardens of the aviary (c 1865) show a large 'walk-through' structure with a canvas roof. However, when William Guilfoyle took over the Gardens in 1873 he quickly dispatched the remaining animals to Royal Park and dismantled the cages to make way for his subtropical Fern Gully.

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Eve Almond

#### BOOK OFFER

*The great gardens of Australia*

The Friends have much pleasure in offering its members another beautiful book at a special discount of \$25.00, including postage. (Recommended retail price \$29.95.) The book is reviewed by Dianna McClellan on page 24.

An order form for purchasing the book is included in this issue and must be returned by Friday, 31st August.

## REJUVENATION OF PROVINCIAL BOTANICAL GARDENS

To celebrate 150 years of European settlement in Victoria in 1984, the Victorian Government has given the approval to the Gardens and Environment Committee to spend \$100,000 on rejuvenating country botanical gardens.

People do not always realise that botanical gardens are Crown Reserves, and that local Councils, or whichever body is responsible for them, are but management committees. Ultimate responsibility rests with the Department of Conservation, Forests and Land. It is from this Department that the Botanical Gardens Rejuvenation Sub-Committee was appointed and comprises the following: Mr. R. Hughes, Director of Crown Land Management; Mr. A. Truter, Landscape Designer; Mr. P. Lumley, Royal Botanic Gardens - Senior Botanist and Ms. Christina FitzSimons, Royal Botanic Gardens - Landscape Architect. Mr. T. Garnett, the 'Age' gardening editor and representing the Gardens and Environment Committee, is also a member.

Following initial investigations of twenty-three gardens by Mr. A. Truter, Mr. J. Dyke\* and Mr. T. Garnett, the Rejuvenation Sub-Committee asked those responsible for gardens to present proposals for restoration. Each garden had to satisfy a strict set of criteria. Did it have botanical merit? Was it established during the 19th century and did it show traces of its original design? Was the garden still publicly owned? Could it be rejuvenated at a reasonable cost and, if so, could sympathetic maintenance be guaranteed to make sure that the work carried out was not wasted? The managing authority's willingness to match the grant-dollar for dollar was also considered important because it encouraged local involvement.

The following gardens - Malmesbury, Kyneton, Maryborough, Wombat Hill at Daylesford, Buninyong, Camperdown, Queen Victoria Park at Beechworth, Castlemaine, Hamilton, Ballarat, Warrnambool and Geelong met the stipulated set of criteria. Three other gardens, Colac, Portland and Bendigo will be assisted with tree surgery and plant identification only.

The managing authorities of the gardens will receive grants ranging from \$1,250 to \$6,500, depending on the amount and type of work needed. The grants will pay for restoration of original features such as fountains, ornamental lakes, ferneries, seats and paths, as well as for tree surgery and replacement. This will play an important part in recapturing the special atmosphere of each garden. Where necessary plants in the botanical gardens will be identified and labelled by staff from the Royal Botanic Gardens and National Herbarium.

Recognising the value of the Malmesbury Gardens, and the amount of restoration work needed, the Rejuvenation Sub-Committee asked the Department to take direct control of the project. This will include dredging and clearing the lake, which has become clogged with weeds. Dead trees and elm suckers will also be removed to help reveal the original form of the garden and paths will be re-constructed. The Department also hopes to restore the fountain and the small islands in the lake as close to their original condition as possible. Ten thousand dollars have been budgeted for this project. It is hoped that this project will make the Malmesbury Gardens the showpiece of the rejuvenation programme.

John Hawker

\* Former Landscape Designer, R.B.G.

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## BIRDS OR BEES?

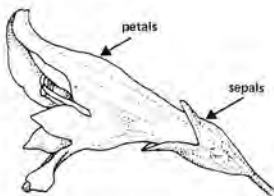
Many kinds of evidence are employed by Herbarium botanists to distinguish one group of plants from another. Morphological features, e.g. the shape, size and arrangement of leaves, flowers and fruits are often used. One group of plants currently under investigation in the Herbarium is the native genus *Prostanthera*, mint bush. (Mint bushes belong to the same family as the well known culinary and herbal mints, *Mentha*. All have strongly aromatic leaves.)

There are some 50 different species of *Prostanthera* and within the genus two subgroups can be distinguished. One group, which includes the popular cultivated *P. ovalifolia* and *P. rotundifolia*, has conspicuous clusters of blue or mauve flowers. The lower lobe of these flowers is usually extended forward to form a 'landing stage' upon which bees and other insects can alight while probing the flower for nectar.

The other group of 15 species has relatively long, tubular red flowers which are not grouped in clusters but occur singularly. There is no landing stage upon which insects can alight. However, several different types of birds such as honeyeaters, miners, spinebills and wattlebills have been observed probing these flowers for nectar. This is produced in the nectary at the base of the tube.

### BIRD POLLINATED *Prostanthera*

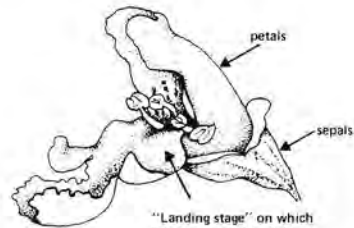
Fig. 1



Long tube shaped flowers without a "landing stage". Flowers single, usually red and scentless. Pollen sticky.

### INSECT POLLINATED *Prostanthera*

Fig. 2



"Landing stage" on which insects can alight while probing the flower for nectar.

Flowers occur in clusters, are blue or mauve and are scented.

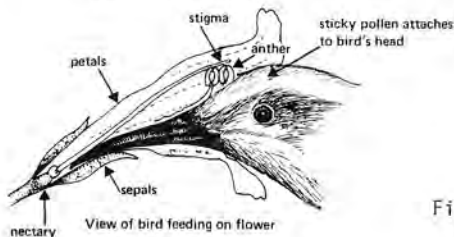


Fig. 3

The structural difference in the flowers of these two groups, as shown in Fig. 1 and Fig. 2 strongly reflect the presumed pollinators. Although the pollinators are different for the two groups, the actual mechanism of pollination is thought to be similar throughout the genus.

#### Pollination Mechanism in the Bird Pollinated Group

Birds feed on the nectar produced at the base of the flower (Fig. 3). As the beak and part of the forehead of the bird enter the flower, the filaments are displaced laterally. This also causes the anthers to be laterally displaced, thus exposing the pollen within the pollen chambers. As the bird's beak and forehead brush past the exposed pollen, which is slightly sticky, the pollen is transferred to the bird's beak. When the bird withdraws from the flower the anthers return to their initial position with the open parts of adjacent anthers in contact. When the anthers have lost most of their pollen the anthers fall apart and lie next to the lower lobe of the flower.

Although the flowers normally hang down, the birds have no difficulty perching (often upside down) on the distal branches while probing the flowers. The slightly sticky pollen found in the flowers of this group is typical of bird pollinated flowers.

Normally, bird-pollinated flowers are red or orange; these colours are not conspicuous to insects, except possibly butterflies. However, in the bird-pollinated mint bushes, some species have greenish flowers. On close inspection it can be seen that the sepals often have a red-purple tinge which is almost as obvious against the green background of the foliage as are the red petals. Several studies have shown that birds do not necessarily appear to have an intrinsic preference for red; it is thought that they learn to associate this flower colour with the high caloric rewards of the nectar. Typical of bird pollinated flowers, those of this group are scentless. Because insects are attracted by odour, they are not aware of the nectar rewards provided by these scentless flowers.

#### The Role of Birds in Pollination

The anthers mature before the stigma is receptive. While the pollen is being released from the anthers the immature stigma lies above and out of contact of the anthers. Therefore, it is not possible for the pollen of one flower to pollinate the ovary of the same flower. Since the sticky pollen can not be transported by air currents, birds are required for pollen transferal to be effective.

Just as your roast lamb is nothing without a dash of mint, a dashing bird makes all the difference to the mint!

Barry Conn  
Botanist  
National Herbarium



## PAST EVENTS ...

### Lady Loch and her Gardening Sister

Our Morning Coffee at Kay Fairley's house was delightfully informal and very pleasant with about 50 members and Friends meeting to hear Mrs. Helen Velacott's interesting talk on Lady Loch and her gardening sister. Mrs. Velacott related many fascinating snippets and anecdotes from Lady Loch's diary and letters. It was an occasion enjoyed by all.

### The Heritage Week Exhibition and Walks-'Our Botanical Heritage'

A great success with more than 4,000 people coming to the Herbarium over the eight days. The official opening on Friday, 6th April by Mr. David Yencken, A.O., Secretary for Planning and The Environment was enjoyed by the 130 guests. Many thanks to the hard working Friends who manned the Sales Table in the Herbarium during that week. Nearly \$1,000 was taken - an excellent achievement! Friends' new postcard proved very popular with at least 150 being sold. It is hoped to offer a second design in the near future.

The Voluntary Guides launched three new walks during that period to mark Heritage Week in the Gardens. The first, the Heritage Walk, actually offered a choice of two routes: both provided fascinating glimpses into our past and were introduced by slides of the Gardens in the earlier days. The second, the Aboriginal Plant Resources Walk, highlighted the different plants used by Aborigines as foods, medicines, fibres etc. The Dyes Plants Walk was the third new walk and concentrates on plants used in natural dyeing. Those of you who were unable to come to the Friends' morning of walks missed three most interesting tours. However, you may still enjoy the walks by making up your own party and booking with the Guides' Convenor Mrs. Lesley Clark, ph: 277 3984.

### Tropical Plant House

We were very pleased to have that extremely interesting preview of the opening of the Tropical Plant House, by courtesy of Peter Lumley, the Garden's Senior Botanist. The Tropical Plant House is now open daily from 10.00 a.m. to 4.00 p.m. and is a most inviting place on a Melbourne winter's day. We were also very impressed by the new adjacent miniature glass house, with its array of small plants, excellently displayed and providing such a ready source of educational material for students.

### Theatre Night

About 80 Friends gathered at the Mobil Centre on 31st May to enjoy a delicious dinner and three delightful films on gardens in the U.K. The first film showed many of the lovely Scottish gardens which flourish despite the rigours of the climate. A delightful overview of English garden styles was presented in the second film, while the third dealt with the work of 'Capability' Brown, ending of course with his greatest masterpiece - the gardens of Blenheim Palace. Thanks to all those (particularly the catering group) who made the evening so successful.



## A.F.G.G.M. MEETING IN ADELAIDE

The Australian Federation of Galleries and Museums (A.F.G.G.M.) held its March meeting in Adelaide timed to co-incide with the last days of the Adelaide Arts Festival. As on previous occasions, the conference proved both enjoyable and rewarding for, in addition to Gallery and Museum representatives from other States, the president of the Friends of the Adelaide Botanic Gardens attended.

The Adelaide Friends group, formed six years ago, has 600 members and, like the Melbourne Friends, its main aims are to stimulate interest in the Botanic Gardens, to protect it, and support it financially, where possible. Currently they are helping the Trustees of the Adelaide Gardens in a publicity campaign to stimulate interest in the funding of a new conservatory.

The A.F.G.G.M. meeting concerned itself among other things, with Federation policy, finance and how best Friends groups within individual States could share information about their problems and successes. Merryl Robson, Friends of the City of Hamilton Art Gallery, is the Victorian State Vice President and will co-ordinate the Victorian Friends Society. She has informed us that later in the year, the Hamilton group, will be conducting some garden tours of the Western District. They will be very happy to have our members join them and will provide more information nearer the time.

Delegates shared money raising ideas, and discussed how best to attract new members and retain old ones. Both the Sydney and Adelaide Friends indicated their membership was growing without any special effort on their part and we hope that this year we can say the same.

Plans for the Paris meeting in July of the World Federation of Friends of Museums are well advanced. Carol Serrenty, as the Australian world delegate, will present a report on the activities of the sixty Australian Federation Member Societies, by means of an audio visual. The Friends of the Royal Botanic Gardens, Melbourne have supplied her with a short account of the Gardens history and some slides. These include the major Ornamental lake, infested with Cow-lily (*Nuphar luteum*) before dredging, and after dredging, filled by the Spring rains and restored to its former beauty. In addition, there is a slide to show the gala family day, when 35,000 people came to the Gardens to celebrate.

We are happy to think that the World Federation will have the chance to learn of the Melbourne Botanic Gardens and the Friends who support it.

Golda Isaac



### Editorial Committee

Dianna McClellan : Convenor and Editor  
Joan Nesbit : Assistant Editor  
Eve Almond : Interpretation Officer, Royal Botanic Gardens and  
National Herbarium

*A garden of scented flowers and leaves is the greatest refreshment of the spirit of man. (Francis Bacon)*

## BOOK REVIEW

*The Garden at Rippon Lea.* Pp 32 (including colour photos). Melbourne. National Trust of Australia (Victoria), 1983. \$1.20

Such an attractive glossy covered guide book, designed by Alison Forbes, will be a delight to visitors of this beautiful 14 acre (5.6 hectare) garden. It has been prepared by Carrick Chambers, Chairman of the Rippon Lea Garden Committee, with the assistance of Oliver Frost, Head Gardener, and the garden staff. A fold-out front cover shows a plan of the property while throughout the guide interesting historical facts are given about the garden and its plants. While walking through the Rippon Lea garden reference can be made to the guide's appropriate section, such as the 'Conservatory', which includes details of the plants growing and in this instance is supported by a lovely full-page colour photo. You may wonder how such a large garden 5 miles (9 km) from the centre of the city of Melbourne has survived the drought - but Rippon Lea has one of the most sophisticated watering and drainage systems ever developed for a private garden. This guide book is a souvenir to be treasured.

Dianna McClellan



TANNER, Howard and BEGG, Jane. *The great gardens of Australia.* New edition. Pp. 198 (including numerous photos, some colour, and plans). South Melbourne, Macmillan (Australia), 1983. \$29.95

As an introduction there is a 53 page overview of the history of gardening in Australia from the first impressions of early visitors and settlers of the Continent up to the Australian garden today. Some of the developments highlighted are those of Alexander Macleay, horticultural societies and the Gardenesque, William Guilfoyle, the Melbourne Botanic Gardens (our Gardens are not referred to in this book by their title the Royal Botanic Gardens, Melbourne), the suburban garden and the work of Edna Walling and Ellis Stones. Details of 33 individual gardens follow the introduction; 14 Victoria, 10 New South Wales, 5 South Australia, 2 Tasmania, 1 Western Australia and 1 Queensland.

In comparing this new edition of *The great gardens of Australia*, published 1983 (Copyright 1976) with the 1976 edition (reprinted 1977) there appears to be no change in text. For example, the entry for 'Mawallock' has not been updated and we read that the Russell family is still in possession of this property. Some photos have been changed between the editions as on page 164, the view at 'Cruden Farm' colour variation between the two editions is noticeable especially on page 194 where the clematis is presented as a very pale pink in the first edition and a definite pink in the newest edition. This is an interesting and enjoyable book, although the possibility of the information dating should be considered, it does give brief details of some important gardens in Australia and Australian gardening developments.

Dianna McClellan



★  
★  
BOOK OFFER

★  
*The great gardens of Australia*, reviewed on page 24 of the Friends newsletter, is available at the discount price of \$25.00 until September. The offer includes packaging and postage. If you wish to purchase copies, please fill in the form below and return it with your cheque or postal order made payable to the: *Friends of the Royal Botanic Gardens, Melbourne.*

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