

# Friends of the Royal Botanic Gardens, Melbourne

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## FROM THE DIRECTOR ...

The winter garden display in July and August this year with the wide range of *Banksia*, *Acacia*, *Narcissus*, *Camellia*, *Prunus*, and *Magnolia* providing colour, and *Lonicera* and *Chimonanthus* providing fragrance, serves to remind our overseas visitors from higher latitudes that Melbourne has four horticultural seasons unlike the three in most countries.

Likewise, in mid-winter, the Minister, Rod Mackenzie, moved quickly and effectively; this time to re-accommodate Australia's major Cryptogamic Collection of lichens, mosses and liverworts as well as the computer and Ecology Unit. The Department of Public Works was so fast and efficient in expediting the four week operation that not a specimen was damaged nor a computer 'byte' lost. Those Friends who knew the old building will appreciate the difference when you visit the new building on the Herbarium Annex site

Have you visited the restored Ornamental Lake recently? The new stonework along the edges of the Lake is almost completed and work will then commence on restoration of the lawns and beds of the promontory opposite the Kiosk.

David M. Churchill  
Director and Government Botanist

*Narcissus bulbocodium*,  
Hoop Petticoat Daffodil



## FROM THE PRESIDENT ...

Professor Tony Eddison, Director-General of Conservation, Forests and Lands when addressing a well attended meeting of the Friends at the Astronomer's Residence, Wednesday, 18th July, 1984 stressed the Friends complementary and important role: complementary to the shared objective that our Royal Botanic Gardens be appreciated and fostered, important in the identification of, and provision of support to, agreed major projects.

To this end Professor Eddison invited the Friends to identify for discussion December 1984 significant projects of interest, such as the need for improved Herbarium facilities, possible scholarships, an appropriate overall program and achievable targets. Professor Eddison's address was most interesting and his encouraging support for the Friends warmly received.

So, the challenge is before us. Your elected Executive Committee, supplemented with volunteers, has enthusiastically embarked on an expanded program of improved services and communications to members, fund raising, membership drive, Christmas Garden Party late November and an active calendar of events as reported in our Newsletters. A Sub-Committee headed by Vice-President Hector Bourne is developing a check list of possible projects, and ideas from members are invited. Your active Committee continues to meet monthly, and it is your support as a member that makes their effort worthwhile.

So, don't delay, send your ideas forward. Participate in our activities as we all look forward to an expanding role for the Friends in the provision of support to our Gardens.

Frank V. Phillips  
President



## A QUICK REMINDER

Don't forget that Dr. David Churchill will be the guest speaker at the Friends and Guides combined luncheon on Monday, 10th September, starting at 10.30 am in the Herbarium Auditorium.

R.S.V.P. 7th September  
Joan Nesbit: 211 8979

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

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## Editorial Committee

Dianna McClellan: Convenor and Editor  
Eve Almond : Interpretation Officer,

Joan Nesbit: Assistant Editor  
Royal Botanic Gardens and  
National Herbarium

## SPRING ACTIVITIES

### VISIT TO CRANBOURNE ANNEX

Once again the Friends are making a spring visit to the Cranbourne Annex, this time on *Sunday 14th October*. Those of you have not seen the Annex, do put the day aside now. Those of you who have been before will see many changes - particularly in the native display garden.

Bring your own picnic lunch and join your Friends in the Cranbourne Rotary Natural Bushland Park at 12.30 p.m. After lunch the group will drive to the Annex to start the guided tours at 2.00 p.m. If you are unable to meet for lunch, perhaps you can join us at the Annex.

R.S.V.P.: 10th October

Joan Nesbit: 211-8979  
Claire Crocker: 241 5951

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### VISIT TO 'BOLOBEK', MT. MACEDON

The Friends are very privileged to be invited to view Lady Law-Smith's beautiful garden, 'Bolobek' on *Saturday, 20th October*. This is indeed a rare opportunity to see one of the nation's outstanding private gardens. Members of the Plant Craft Cottage have also been invited and the two groups will travel together by bus.

One bus will leave the National Herbarium, Birdwood Avenue, at 9.30 a.m., arriving at 'Bolobek' at approximately 10.45 a.m. This group will be guided around the garden and then lunch at the property. The bus will leave at approximately 1.15 p.m., returning to Melbourne by 2.30 p.m.

A second group will leave the Herbarium at 12.00 noon, travel to 'Bolobek' and have lunch before being shown around the garden. They will leave Mt. Macedon at approximately 3.30 p.m. to arrive back at the Herbarium by 5.00 p.m.

Please bring your own picnic lunch, thermos and cold-wet weather gear. Tickets may be obtained by completing the enclosed form and returning it to the Ticket Secretary, C/- National Herbarium of Victoria.

R.S.V.P.: 12th October  
Ticket Secretary

Tickets: \$12.00  
(includes bus)

## THE SPECIES ROSE GARDEN - Guided tour in the Gardens

Peter Lumley, Gardens' Senior Botanist, will give a talk and guided tour of the Species Rose Garden (opposite 'C' gate) on *Tuesday, 30th October*. A fascinating morning ensured for all lovers of 'old-fashioned' roses. Do make an early reservation as numbers will be limited to 25.

The introductory talk at the Astronomer's Residence, Birdwood Avenue, will commence at 10.00 a.m.

R.S.V.P.: 25th October

Joan Nesbit: 211-8979  
Claire Crocker: 241 5951

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## THE HERBARIUM COLLECTIONS - Guest speaker and luncheon

Dr. Jim Willis, former Assistant Government Botanist, will be the guest speaker at another combined luncheon with the Voluntary Guides in the Herbarium on *Monday, 12th November*, starting at 10.30 a.m. Dr. Willis, a most delightful and informative speaker will discuss some of the famous plant collections held in the Herbarium.

R.S.V.P.: 9th November  
Joan Nesbit: 211-8979  
Claire Crocker: 241 5951

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

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## FRIENDS' END-OF-YEAR CELEBRATION

Friends are planning a very special end-of-year function in the Gardens on *Thursday, 22nd November*. Invitations will be sent out later but please put the evening aside now.



'BOLOBEK'- a 'magical garden' at the base of Mount Macedon

'Bolobek' is a modern garden superimposed on an older site. Originally it was an Edwardian garden created by Mr. and Mrs. Oswald Syme in 1908, around a large, red brick house. It has since been replanned by Sir Robert and Lady Law-Smith who in 1969 purchased the property and soon replaced the house by a low spacious villa with slate roof, whitewashed walls and expansive windows. Many of the trees have been retained, including an avenue of Lombardy poplars with a vista to Mount Robertson and another forming the Linden walk. 'Bolobek' has been described as 'essentially a rectilinear garden with strong axes, vistas and cross-vistas'. There is a walled rose garden, ornamental lake, pergolas and clipped hedges. The planting is delicate with no brilliant colours. In summer the garden is green and white with white petunias, green and white nicotiana and zinnias. This theme is continued in other seasons with white azaleas, wisteria, hydrangeas, green-white Christmas roses (*Helleborus* sp.) and Solomon's Seal (*Polygonatum* sp.). As the climate can be very cold with severe frosts plant species have to be chosen accordingly.

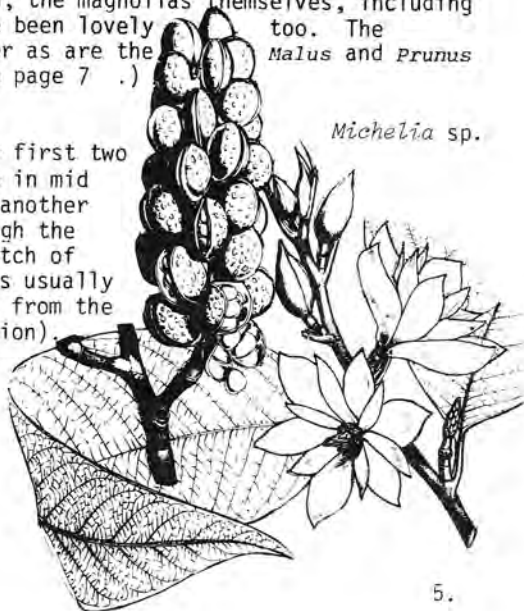
The Friends look forward to viewing the garden on Saturday 20th October. See page 3 for details.



## SPRING IN THE GARDENS

Spring has been unusually early this year with one of the highlights being the prolific flowering of the Himalayan *Michelia doltsopa* in the Magnolia Bed between the Southern Lawn and Nursery. This hardy evergreen tree has been covered with creamy-white fragrant blooms since mid July. Of course as the Director has already mentioned, the magnolias themselves, including *Magnolia stellata* and *M. korbus*, have been lovely too. The camellias are still coming into flower as are the *Malus* and *Prunus* trees (see Michael Looker's article on page 7 .)

In keeping with the early season, the first two cygnets appeared on the Nymphaea Lake in mid July. They were closely followed by another pair on the Ornamental Lake. (Although the female black swan normally lays a clutch of 4-8 green, elliptical eggs, our cygnets usually come in twos: eggs are always culled from the nests to control the Gardens' population). Swans usually form permanent partnerships and in southern Australia the main breeding season is in spring and early summer. In the Gardens where there is always a plentiful supply of food, (courtesy of the visitors), up to four broods can be produced in any one year.



*Michelia* sp.

Most of the Gardens' swans nest on the islands in the Ornamental Lake where they build untidy piles of twigs, grasses, sedges and cumbungi usually up to one metre in diameter and one-third of a metre in height. Both males and females take turns to sit on the eggs: the average incubation period is 40 days.

Swans are vegetarian, grazing at the water's edge on grasses and using their long necks to scoop up algae or uproot plants in the water. The cygnets too are vegetarian and from now on more family groups will be seen grazing on the Hopetoun and Southern Lawns. Don't get too close though - those proud parents can be very protective of their young!

#### Reference

Frith, H. J. (1977) *Waterfowl in Australia*  
Sydney, Reed. pp.90-105



#### WEST KIMBERLEY ADVENTURE

Helen Aston was one of 22 people who travelled on a specially-organised expedition for 12 days in June on a 60 foot big game fishing boat from Derby, W.A., north up the remote West Kimberley coastline to explore the Prince Regent and Hunter Rivers. Four small dinghies provided access up mangrove-lined streams and to campsites ashore on tiny beaches backed by vine thickets and edged by rugged cliffs. One excellent campsite on the rock ledges adjoining Camp Creek, a small tributary of the Prince Regent, allowed two days of investigation along this delightful freshwater stream and provided the botanical highlight of the trip, namely the sighting and collecting of *Trithuria submersa*, a submerged stiff moss-like flowering plant which only exists in turbulent clear freshwater. Camp Creek is only the fourth known find of this species in Australia.

Ornithologically, the sighting of the eye-boggling Rainbow Pitta on an unnamed island off the mouth of the Hunter River won the prize. History also pervaded the trip as King and the botanist Allan Cunningham had been in these waters. A night ashore at Careening Bay, where their cutter had been careened, produced the Boab Tree, *Adansonia gregorii*, which still bears in good unvandalised order the inscription King had had carved upon it 164 years previously - 'H.M.C. Mermaid 1820.'

Friends who would like more information on this rugged, difficult and generally inaccessible region could consult *A botanical survey of the Prince Regent River Reserve, north-west Kimberley, Western Australia* by Miles and Burbidge, 1975.

Helen Aston  
Curator, National Herbarium



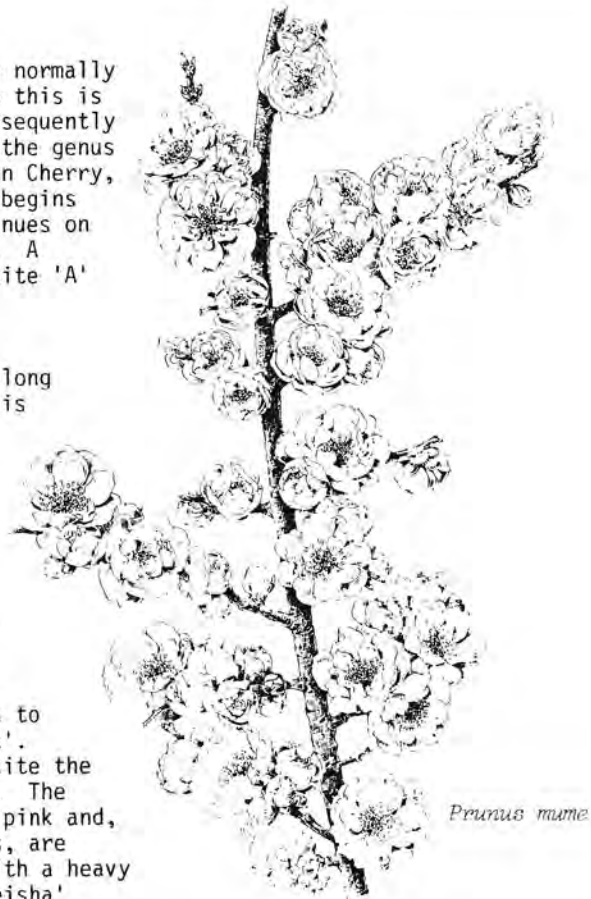
The flowering of cherry blossom is normally thought to herald Spring and while this is true of the widely planted and consequently better known cultivars, others in the genus begin well before this. The Autumn Cherry, *Prunus subhirtella* 'Autumnalis', begins flowering in late Autumn and continues on and off through the Winter months. A specimen of this can be seen opposite 'A' gate lodge.

The group which really begins the long succession of flowering, however, is the Japanese Flowering Apricots (*Prunus mume* and its cultivars). These are native to China where they are said to have been in cultivation for some 1500 years. *P. mume* was also introduced into Japan at an early date and some 300 cultivars have been developed there.

The first cultivar of this species to flower here is *Prunus mume* 'Geisha'. (This can be seen in the bed opposite the Golden Cedar on the Princes Lawn). The flowers of this cultivar are rich pink and, as with all the Flowering Apricots, are freely borne on mid-green stems with a heavy but attractive scent. *P. mume* 'Geisha' begins flowering about mid June and continues for several weeks before the blossoming of the other Japanese Apricots, namely the double white *P. mume* 'Alba plena' (next to the Rose Bed below the Nursery) and the adjacent double deep pink *P. mume* 'Splendens'.

Next to flower, towards the end of July, is *Prunus campanulata*, Bell Flowered Cherry, a species native to Taiwan and southern China. A small tree, it has rich red-purple flowers which hang like bells from long flower stalks. There is a fine specimen in the triangle between the Oak and Princes Lawns.

*Prunus* 'Pollardii', an Australian raised cultivar, begins flowering shortly after *P. campanulata*. This cultivar was raised in 1864 by a Mr. Pollard of Creswick, and is said to be formed from a cross between an almond, *P. dulcis*, and a peach, *P. persica*. The flowers are soft pink, large, and single. Several specimens can be seen around the Gardens but perhaps the best one grows on the Northern Border of the Western Lawn.



*Prunus mume*

Flowering almost at the same time as *P. 'Pollardii'* are the very popular double pink *Prunus x blireiana* and its paler pink selection *Prunus x blireiana 'Moseri'*. *Prunus x blireiana* is believed to be a hybrid between *P. cerasifera 'Atropurpurea'*, Purple Cherry Plum, and a double form of *P. mume*. It was originally released into the nursery trade in 1906 by Lemoine in France and nine years later was introduced into Victoria by the Nobelius Nurseries in Emerald.

In the past, nursery stocks of *Prunus x blireiana* and *P. x blireiana 'Moseri'* have been confused; this is noticeable in avenues planted around Melbourne where a lack of uniformity occurs with the lighter and darker flowering forms.

Unfortunately, the strong growing and free flowering *P. x blireiana* overshadows another very ornamental cultivar, *Prunus 'Okame'*, which flowers at the same time. This cultivar has delicate pink flowers which hang below the branches from long flower stalks. It was raised from a cross between *P. incisa* and *P. campanulata* by Capt. Collingwood Ingram, an acknowledged world expert in the genus. An outstanding specimen of *Prunus 'Okame'* can be found in the bed behind the Director's Residence, facing the Princes Lawn.

Towards the end of August the well known and much planted *Prunus cerasifera* group of cultivars begin to flower. These include the popular *Prunus cerasifera 'Atropurpurea'*, Purple Cherry Plum, previously known under the name *P. cerasifera 'Pissardii'* and its darker-leaved form *P. cerasifera 'Nigra'*. Efforts to distinguish between these two in flower are often confounded for both can appear pink in colour. However, *P. cerasifera 'Atropurpurea'* has white petals and any pink seen is only a reflection from the red calyx.

A cultivar from this group worth noting is the Australian raised *Prunus cerasifera 'Festeri'*, seen on the Northern Lawn near the shelter. This cultivar was named to commemorate Mr. H. Fester, one time head gardener of the Kenmore Base Hospital in Goulburn. It has leaves and flowers twice the size of *P. cerasifera 'Nigra'*.

Another Australian raised cultivar, *Prunus 'Elvins'*, starts to flower at the beginning of September. There is a specimen outside the Tropical Plant House. This prolific flowering cultivar originated in the garden of Miss Myrtle Elvins of 37 Linda Crescent, Hawthorn (and now part of the Glenferrie Football Ground). Attempts were made during the 1950's and early 1960's to find its correct name and specimens were sent to the Arnold Arboretum in America where it was identified as *P. salicina* or a hybrid of it, possibly crossed with *p. cerasifera*. However, because uncertainty still exists over its parentage, *Prunus 'Elvins'* remains the most satisfactory name.

Also flowering at the beginning of September are two of the earliest

recorded *Prunus* cultivars to be grown in Victoria. The double white *Prunus glandulosa* 'Alba plena' was first distributed in Victoria in 1860 by J. & J. Rule of Melbourne and the pink flowered *P. glandulosa* 'Sinensis' by Charles Wyatts Frogmore Nurseries of Geelong in 1874.

Next to flower in the Gardens is the species *Prunus triloba*. (There is a good specimen behind the Ladies Toilet on the Oak Lawn). This forms a shrub or small tree and has large double pink flowers held closely to the stems. *P. triloba* is native to China and the double flowered form, from which the species was described, was collected by Robert Fortune in 1855. It was first distributed in Victoria at the turn of the century by the Cremorne Nurseries in Richmond.

A group not very well represented in the Gardens and flowering towards the middle of September is *Prunus subhirtella*, Higan Cherry and its cultivars. Many of these, especially the very ornamental pendulous cultivars *Prunus subhirtella* 'Pendula' and *Prunus subhirtella* 'Pendula Rubra', can be seen growing throughout the Dandenong Ranges.

Flowering at the same time as the Higan Cherry or shortly after, are the Flowering Peach, *Prunus persica*, and its cultivars. Perhaps the most striking of this group is the cultivar *Prunus persica* 'Versicolor' seen in the bed south of the Tecoma Shelter on the Eastern Lawn. It displays a mixture of two different flower colour types on the one tree, i.e. individual flowers are either pink-red or a combination of pink-red and white. Other flowering peaches to be seen in the Gardens are the double white *Prunus persica* 'Alba plena', in the Lakeside bed, west of the Kiosk and *P. persica* 'Magnifica' which has large double deep rich pink-red flowers. There is a specimen on the Hopetoun Lawn Border near the Temple of the Winds.

The last major group to flower is the so-called Sato Zakura or Japanese Garden Cherries. These begin blossoming at the end of September and continue through almost to the end of October. The origin of the Japanese Garden Cherries is obscure. However both the Hill Cherry, *P. serrulata* var. *spontanea*, and the Oshima Cherry, *P. speciosa*, are said to have played an important part in their development.

In the past, it has been usual to place the Sato Zakura under the heading *P. serrulata*. However, because of the confusion which exists over their origin, it is best to treat them in the same way as *Prunus* 'Pollardii' and *P.* 'Elvins' by placing the cultivar name directly after the generic name, e.g. *Prunus* 'Kanzan', *Prunus* 'Amonogawa'.

Currently, there are about 13 cultivars grown around Melbourne, the most popular of which is the double pink *Prunus* 'Kazan'. Other Japanese Cherries which can be seen in the Gardens are *Prunus* 'Ichiyo', behind the Ladies Toilet on the Oak Lawn; *P.* 'Shirofugen', Lakeside bed below Craft Cottage, and *P.* 'Ukon', Anderson Street bed, opposite Tecoma Shelter.

If you are in the Gardens in October, do look out for the Sato Zakura. They make a fine display.

Michael Looker  
Horticultural Section  
Royal Botanic Gardens



## PAST EVENTS ...

### The Native Garden

A most interesting and informative talk, illustrated by a selection of remarkable cut flowers was given by Rodger Elliot, guest speaker at the Friends Voluntary Guides combined luncheon on Monday, 9th July. Attended by more than 60 people, the function was a most successful start to the joint Friends Guides luncheon program.

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### From Horses to Computers

With others, we were sorry to see Allan Gardiner leave the Gardens he so loves and where he has built such a splendid reputation over many years. However we were so very pleased at the number of Friends and well-wishers, including many associated with the Gardens, who were able to attend the recent farewell to Allan. In addition to his many claims to fame in the horticultural field, Allan is also an accomplished speaker, and his reminiscences proved a highlight of a very happy occasion. Again Allan, our very best wishes to you and your family in the years ahead.

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Joan Nesbit

### The Australian Flora and Early German Botanists

The Friends were privileged on Thursday 9th August to have as their guest speaker Dr Sophie Ducker, Senior Associate in the Botany School, University of Melbourne. Dr Ducker's subject was German botanical collectors in Australia during the early colonial period. Among those whose careers she outlined were Franz Sieber, who was in New South Wales in 1823, and Ludwig Preiss and Baron von Hugel, both of whom collected in the Swan River Colony in the 1830's. Dr Ducker's entertaining talk was backed by the authority of many years' research into her topic.

Helen Cohn

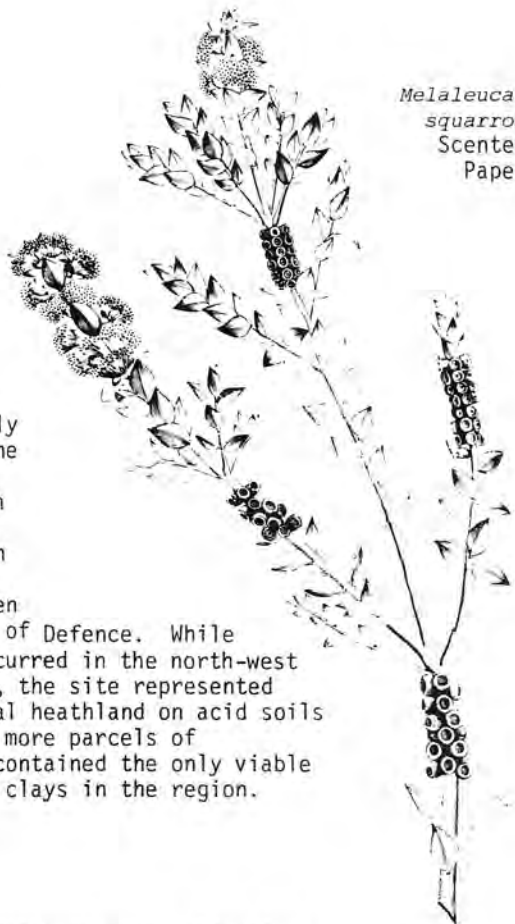
# THE ROYAL BOTANIC GARDENS ANNEX

## INTRODUCTION

With another visit being planned for this Spring, many Friends will no doubt be interested to know a little of the background to the Annex, its objectives and the current development concepts for this exciting project.

The Cranbourne Annex is approximately 45 kilometres south-east of Melbourne and covers some 324 hectares. The first 174 hectares were purchased in 1970 by the Victorian Government with assistance from the Maud Gibson Trust. The land, previously the Cranbourne Military Reserve, had been held by the Commonwealth Department of Defence. While considerable sand extraction had occurred in the north-west corner and on the southern boundary, the site represented the largest remaining area of natural heathland on acid soils near Melbourne. Subsequently three more parcels of adjoining land were purchased; one contained the only viable remnant of grassy woodland on Naree clays in the region.

*Melaleuca squarrosa*,  
Scented  
Paperbark



## OBJECTIVES

The Annex was established with the following main objectives.

1. To develop and maintain a display garden of labelled Australian native plants for the enjoyment and education of visitors.
2. To develop and maintain national collections of Australian plants, including rare and endangered species. This aim includes the use of the garden as part of an Australian-wide network of collections of native plants.
3. To maintain an area of natural vegetation for the scientific study of these communities and especially of the biology of sandy heathland flora.
4. To develop an experimental area for the domestication and cultivation of native plants. This area will be used to produce plants suitable for particular environments or landscape uses.
5. To provide interpretational, educational and promotional material for visitors.

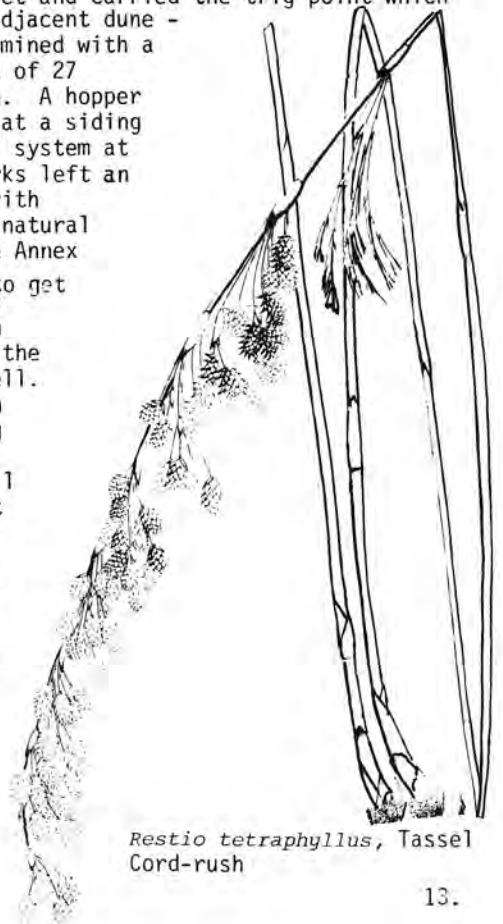
## DEVELOPMENT CONCEPTS

Planning to implement these objectives has proceeded slowly as major funding has not been forthcoming. Initially time and effort were spent on protecting the site from rubbish dumpers, car strippers, shooters, horse and trail bike riders and dune buggies. It was not until 1976, when a staff member was seconded full-time to the Annex and a residence built, that reasonable control was exercised. The gardener in residence is Gordon Bertram; he has two assistants. Apart from development their work comprises fire protection, security, track clearance and weed control. Several development plans have been prepared and for various reasons rejected. The current Development Concept divides the Annex into a number of zones which are outlined below and indicated on the sketch plan on page 14.

### 1. Native Botanic Garden Zone

This zone occupies the area in the north-west corner of the Annex which was heavily sandmined under licence for 44 years. Excavation of the massive sand-dune known locally as 'Empire Hill' began in 1928. It was then the highest point in the district and carried the trig point which was later transferred to a smaller adjacent dune - its present location. The sand was mined with a scoop pulled across the exposed face of 27 metres by a winch-drawn cable system. A hopper loaded the sand into railway trucks at a siding which was connected to the main rail system at Cranbourne. The sand extraction works left an undulating, barren, windswept area with little or no top soil and two small natural lagoons. The first plantings in the Annex

occurred here in 1976 in an effort to get windbreaks established as quickly as possible. Mainly Western Australian species were tried and, considering the harsh conditions, fared extremely well. Many species have been planted in an attempt to select useful landscaping species and to be a source of propagating material. This zone will be the site of intensive development as a display of labelled Australian plants in a landscaped setting and the main focus for visitors. Under a recent Community Employment Program (CEP), the roads have been put in and the lagoons extended. The central water feature has been partly excavated. Smoothing of the contours and slashing of existing vegetation have set the stage for effective management of the area. Some of the proposed national collections



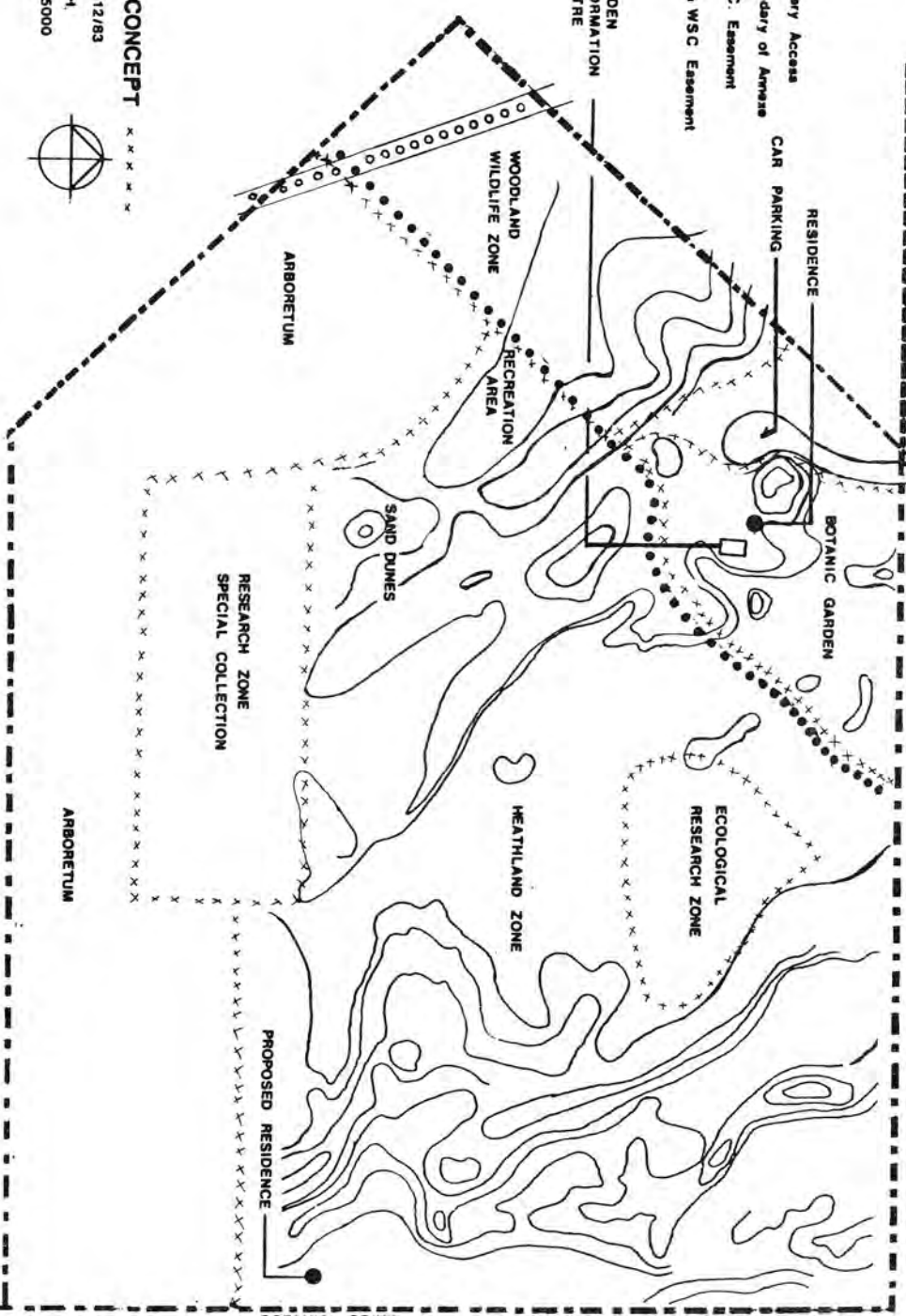
*Restio tetraphyllus*, Tassel  
Cord-rush

# Cranbourne Annex

BALLARTO ROAD

## LEGEND

- Primary Access
- - - Boundary of Annex
- 0 0 0 S.E.C. Easement
- • • S.R. & W.S.C. Easement



ZONING CONCEPT x x x x x

DATE : 9/12/83  
 DRAWN BY : BH  
 SCALE : 1:5000



BOTANIC DRIVE

will be planted here but landscaping requirements will limit the number of species.

## 2. Natural Heathland Zone

This area will be retained as natural heathland and will be traversed by walking tracks, some of which have been cut through the bush and later by nature trails. The heathland in fact consists of two main vegetation associations and a number of minor ones. The high ground vegetation is characterised by *Leptospermum myrsinoides*, *Aotus ericoides*, *Epacris impressa* and *Acacia genistifolia*. *Eucalyptus viminalis* is common. Around the natural swamps and lagoons the vegetation is characterised by *Leptospermum juniperinum*, *Gahnia sieberiana* with *Restio tetraphyllus*, *Gleichenia microphylla* and *Melaleuca squarrosa* in the wetter areas. Trees in the wetter areas are *Eucalyptus cephalocarpa* and *E. ovata*. Research on small mammal populations (including the rare New Holland Mouse, *Pseudomys novae hollandiae*) shows that the obvious growth in height of the heathland communities is accompanied by a decrease in plant diversity and change in food supply and shelter for animals. In order to maintain the communities at a level typical of the early stages of succession, the land must be managed and growth controlled by slashing or by fire. This zone will provide heathland walking tracks and spring wildflower displays.

Access for fire trucks must be maintained around the periphery of this zone.

## 3. Ecological Research Zone

This zone lies within the heathland zone. It will not be open to the general public and is deliberately placed well away from proposed walking tracks. Part of this area was slashed in 1981 to study the effects of the simulated earlier stage of heathland regeneration on the fauna.

## 4. Sand Dune Zone

This relatively small area towards the south of the Annex will be left untouched. At present it contains some mobile dunes which may or may not stabilise without management. It could be used for studies of dune stabilisation and revegetation of mined areas.

## 5. Special Collections Zone

This zone will house collections for which there is insufficient room in the main display garden. It will be used for trialling newly domesticated species and new cultivars. Joint projects with specialist societies or the nursery industry will be encouraged. The Society for Growing Australian Plants has already planted several hundred Proteaceae here. A small nursery is proposed but sophisticated propagation facilities and laboratories are not planned for the near future. Adequate facilities exist or are planned at the Royal Botanic Gardens. A new residence is proposed for the south-east corner of the Annex to provide the necessary security for this zone.

## 6. Arboretum

An arboretum is a botanic garden devoted to trees only. This zone would be a low maintenance area containing groups of tree species arranged informally on the existing rough grassland. Much of the national collection of *Acacia* would be planted here as would many *Eucalyptus* species.

### 7. Wildlife Zone

This zone like the Heathland Zone will be conserved in the natural state and be traversed by a few walking tracks. The woodland and grassland understorey is a suitable habitat for a variety of birds and some larger marsupials, notably kangaroos and wallabies. The clay soils of this area will be suitable for certain species that are difficult to cultivate on sand and the eastern margin of this area could be incorporated into the Botanic Garden Zone. The woodland on this zone is the last remnant of its type in the area.

### 8. Recreation Zone

This zone, close to the proposed carpark is cleared and sheltered and could be used at least in the early stages of development as a picnic area and possibly playground area.

### 9. Carpark and Services

The carpark is planned for a small cleared and sandmined area which provides easy access to several zones and to the highest point in the Annex from which can be seen excellent views of the Annex and the surrounding countryside.

## THE FUTURE

Realisation of these development concepts will occur only if substantial funding is received. A submission for Bicentennial Funding was made by the Department of Conservation, Forests and Lands in 1984. Parties of visitors may be shown over the Annex upon application and several Voluntary Guides are undertaking further training to host groups at Cranbourne. They will be on hand to show the Friends around on Sunday 14th October.



## THANK YOU .... AND A SPECIAL OFFER

A traditional English garden bench has been donated to the Gardens jointly by the UK Manufacturing Company Lister and the Australian distributors, Park Lane Garden Furniture. The Mendip style bench is six feet long with scroll arms and heavy slat seat made from Burma Teak, *Tecona grandis*. Friends can view this bench with its commemorative plaque (together with two purchased benches) in the area of the Kiosk.

Park Lane Garden Furniture is making a special offer to Friends of the Lister range of teak furniture. They are offering a discount of 15 percent off the recommended retail price, delivered free in the Melbourne area. Enclosed is a brochure displaying a range of this attractive garden teak furniture. An example of the special price to Friends is the six foot Warwick at \$485.00. Further details are available from David Sangster on 878-1015.

## THE TROPICAL PLANT HOUSE

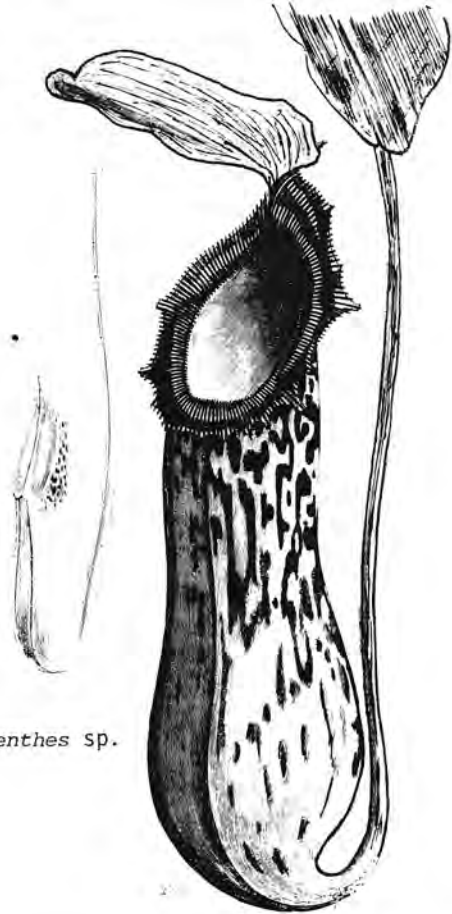
The newly renovated Tropical Plant House is now filled with striking plants of different shapes, sizes, colours and textures from all over the world. The temperature of the House is kept between 20°C and 37°C with hot-water pipes heated by an oil-fired boiler. The humidity ranges from 75% to 85% so that the conditions are ideal for plants from the tropical rainforests of the Amazon Basin, Central America, East and West Africa, the Indo-Malaysian Archipelago, India and north-eastern Australia.



*Anthurium warocqueanum*

Among the spectacular ornamental plants in the House are a number of anthuriums including *Anthurium warocqueanum* which has green velvety leaves up to one metre long. *A. crystallinum* also has huge leaves with a network of silver markings. *A. andraeanum*, Tailflower, produces green heart-shaped leaves which contrast with the bright red spathe, or modified leaf, surrounding the flower spike. The attractive *A. scherzerianum*, Flamingo Flower, has a similar scarlet spathe and bright green leaves. *Spathiphyllum cannifolium* has a white spathe and spike.

Many of the variegated plants are ornamental cultivars of *Codiaeum variegatum*. They are prized for their highly coloured and textured leaves. The House also contains a number of species of *Dieffenbachia*, another group of decorative plants with brightly variegated foliage. There are several species of *Pandanus*, Screw-pine, on the centre bench. The most striking is in a tub at the entrance to the House and has several epiphytic bromeliads attached to it. Screw-pines grow naturally on the edge of mangrove swamps or along rivers where the stilt-like aerial roots which protrude from the trunk help support the plant in the soft ground. Nearby are large baskets of *Lycopodium squarrosum*, Clubmoss, which is a primitive plant bearing spores in spore cases in the bases of its upper leaves. This Queensland species is now quite rare in its native habitat of lowland swamps and rainforests. *Psilotum nudum*, Whisk-fern, is another primitive vascular plant; it too produces spore cases in the leaf axils. *Angiopteris evecta*, Turnip-fern, is widespread throughout the subtropics including northern Australia. Its common name refers to the shape of its short thick basal stem. The turnip-like basal stem of the closely related *Marattia fraxinea*, King-fern, was much eaten by the Maoris.



*Nepenthes* sp.

Overhead you will see several baskets of the remarkable carnivorous *Nepenthes* spp., Pitcher Plant. The 'pitcher' is a modified leaf of these sturdy green or red flowers are clustered on separate stems. The opening of the pitcher has a hard glossy rim containing nectar-secreting glands at its lower edge. Below the downward curving rim is a slippery waxy area. The remainder of the inside wall is pitted with glands which secrete digestive fluids and absorb the broken down material. Insects attracted by the nectar slip on the rim or the waxy wall to fall into the digestive fluid where they struggle and drown. The insect is then digested over the next day or so to provide important nutrients to the plant. Most carnivorous plants grow naturally in acid, boggy soils where there is a range of nutrient deficiencies, particularly nitrogen.

The Tropical House also contains a number of plants which are economically important to man, providing food, spices, etc. They include:

*Ananas comosus*, Pineapple, a member of the Bromeliad family with the characteristic rosette of rigid green-gray leaves. The violet flowers are borne in dense heads and develop into a single fleshy fruit. Native to South America, pineapples are now cultivated in plantations in almost all tropical countries.

*Carludovica palmata*, Panama-hat Plant, is a stemless plant with fan-shaped palm-like leaves which, as the common name indicates, have been used in making hats.

*Coffea arabica*, Coffee, a small evergreen shrub from Ethiopia. Its white fragrant flowers are followed by crimson berries, each containing two seeds or 'beans'. Traditionally, coffee is made by boiling the ground roasted beans in water or by infusion. 'Instant coffee' is prepared from the dehydrated beverage.

There are some 600 different species of *Ficus*, mostly occurring in the Indo-Malaysian regions, although *Ficus carica*, the Common Fig, (often seen in Melbourne gardens), is native to the Mediterranean countries.

*Ficus religiosa*, Bo Tree, holds special significance for Hindus and Buddhists. It is a large tree, growing up to 30 metres with bluish-green heart-shaped leaves. The closely related *Ficus benghalensis*, Strangler Fig, starts out as an epiphyte.

*Hevea brasiliensis*, Para Rubber Tree, is native to the Amazon Basin but now grown in commercial plantations in many tropical countries. Rubber is derived from its milky sap or latex. This tree should not be confused with the Indian Rubber Plant, *Ficus elastica*, a common indoor plant which also produces latex.

*Myristica fragrans*. Two spices are derived from the yellow pear-like fruit of this evergreen tree from Indonesia. The outer-covering of the seed is dried and cured to be used as 'mace' in cakes and preserves: the shelled seed or 'nutmeg' is also used in cakes and desserts.

*Piper nigrum*, Pepper plant, is a perennial vine with winding stems covered with leathery, glossy leaves. The condiment 'pepper' is derived from the long clusters of berries which are dried, used whole, ground or powdered.

*Ravenala madagascariensis*, Travellers' Palm, is a most striking plant with feathery leaves on long stalks. Rain water is retained in the cup-shaped leaf bases for some days where it is available to thirsty travellers.

*Theobroma cacao*, Cocoa, is native to tropical America and was well known to the Aztec civilisation. The 12-40 centimetre long fruits are borne on the trunk and old wood and it is their seeds which are used in the manufacture of chocolate and cocoa.

The drink is prepared from an extract of ground cocoa seeds flavoured with sugar and vanilla: chocolate is made from a solid fat extract of the seeds - cocoa butter.

*Vanilla pompona* is a large leaved climbing orchid originating in tropical America. Vanilla essence is usually derived from the pods of the closely related *v. planifolia* although *v. pompona* is a secondary source.



*Carludovica palmata*,  
Panama-hat  
Plant



*Myristica fragrans*,  
Nutmeg

Of course there are literally hundreds of other fascinating plants in the House in addition to those just mentioned. It's another part of the Gardens' collections that deserve repeat visits.

Eve Almond.



Don't forget that Fryer's Nursery, 598 Glenferrie Road, Hawthorn, offer a 10% discount on all cash transactions to Friends on the production of a Friends membership card.



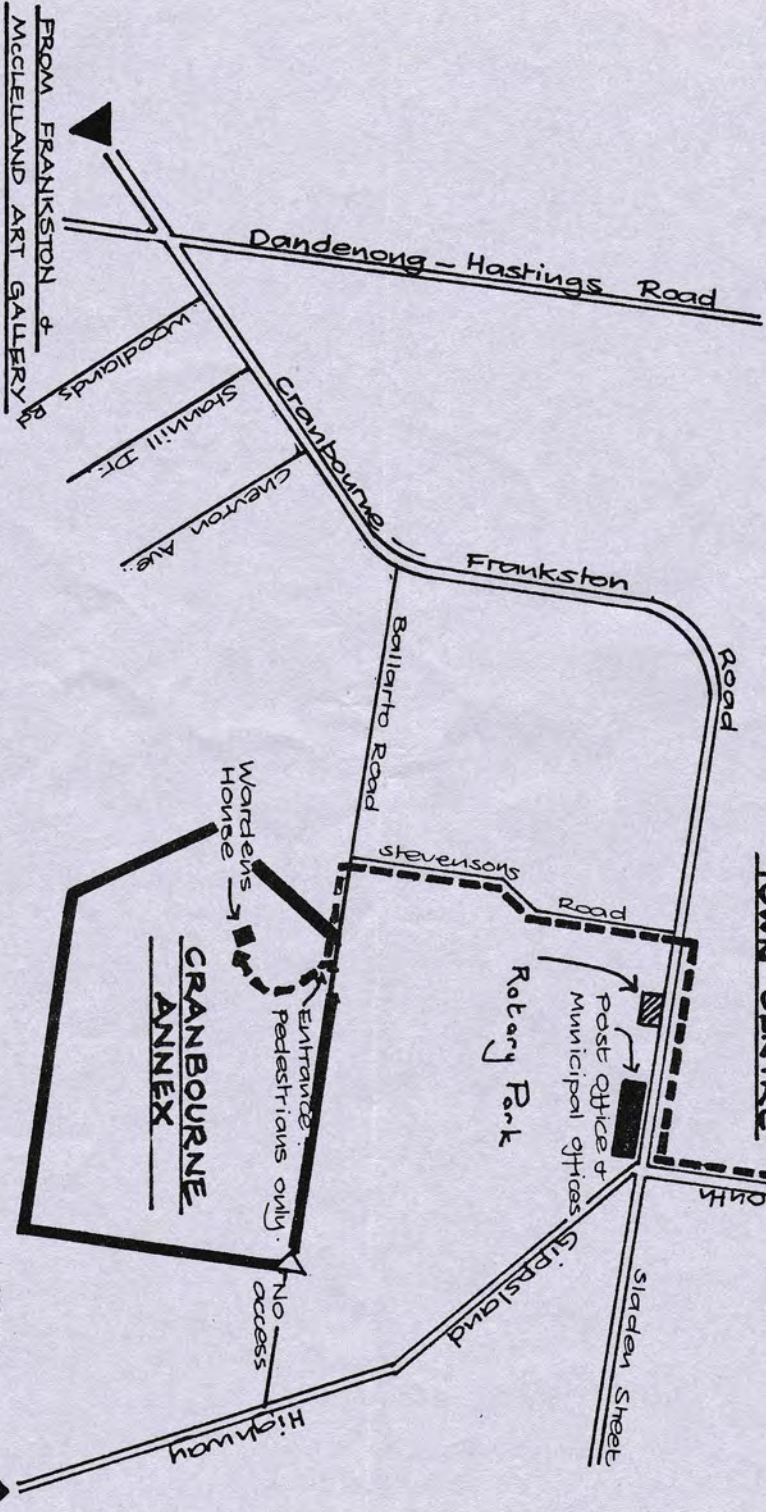
## BOOK REVIEW

LAW-SMITH, Joan. *The uncommon garden*. Pp. 128 (including colour plates and line illustrations). Melbourne, Women's Committee of the National Trust of Australia (Victoria), 1983. \$25.00

This is a delightful book, beautifully illustrated in soft tones so characteristic of Joan Law-Smith's 'Bolobek' garden near Mt. Macedon which the Friends have been invited to visit (see page 3 for details). The delicate pinks and mauves, the green and white of *Polygonatum multiflorum* and *Rosa* 'Boule de Neige' a fragrant creamy double white rose edged with deep pink. Perhaps the masterpiece is the double page illustration of daffodils, *Narcissus pseudonarcissus* (also on the book cover) with the added interest of ground plants such as the shy Violet and the Forget-me-not. Several of the flower illustrations have the added interest of a bird or butterfly. The text includes history, and the discussion and description of plants suitable for certain conditions; a listing beginning on page 30 extends for several pages giving the 'names and details of beautiful and interesting shade-loving plants that have adapted to using low levels of light with great efficiency'. In the chapter 'The Genus *Rosa*' we read that for the Romans the rose was connected with secrecy and that an anonymous Latin poet wrote 'The rose is the flower of Venus: in order that her sweet thefts might be concealed... Hence the host hangs over his friendly table a rose, that the guests underneath it may know how to keep silence as to what is said'. The after-dinner conversation was said to be *sub rosa* and so had the confidential respect of diplomatic conversations. Interestingly the 'ceiling rose' above the table in Victorian dining rooms reflects this custom.

Anyone who likes a well produced book and enjoys the pleasantries of gardens and gardening will enjoy dipping into this work, and perhaps contemplate the statement 'the glory of the garden is in the different greens, the beauty of textures, the fragrance and the moving light and shadow'.

Dianna McClellan



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MCCLELLAND ART GALLERY

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Chevton Ave

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Frankston

Road

Ballarto Road

Stevensons Road

Road

**CRANBOURNE  
TOWN CENTRE**

Rotary Park  
Post Office of  
Municipal Offices

South

FROM MELBOURNE

Sladen Street

Slipperland

Highway

NO  
access

FROM  
PHILIP ISLAND

**CRANBOURNE  
ANNEX**

Entrance  
pedestrians only  
Wardens  
House

**PARKING:** You will be directed  
where to park on arrival  
of the main gate.