



BOTANIC NEWS
SPRING 1988

FROM THE PRESIDENT

One of the joys of living in Melbourne must surely be that we have clearly defined seasons. All gardeners look forward to Spring, and perhaps it is not too early, in this issue, to talk of the growth coming back into our Botanic Gardens. As announced, the creation of the 'Growing Friends' section augurs well for the future. The mail out included in the Winter 1988 edition of *Botanic news* was well received and requests have now been filled as part of the distribution of surplus seeds, June to August 1988. Enthusiastic volunteers and Gardens staff are continuing to develop this new initiative, with the forward projects including the germination and 'growing on' to sale size. The nursery area, to the rear of the old Astronomers Residence, has been established with funds made available by the 'Friends', and we all have high hopes for this most exciting and innovative venture. Our thanks go to John Taylor, Manager, Botanic Gardens for his ideas and enthusiastic backing of this project.

The Annual General Meeting, May 30, was well attended with the incoming Council being:

President	Frank Phillips
Vice Presidents	Eve Brunner David Wilkinson
Immediate Past President	Beth Higgs
Secretary	Lawrence J. Cohen
Treasurer	David Taplin (appointed June 21)
Members	Phillip Ayton Lesley Clark Barbara Hamer Golda Isaac

Your elected Council, plus the many volunteers, will continue to deliver a most active program '88 through '89. On this occasion an election was necessary as more members had been nominated to Council than the constitution provides. This is a very healthy situation to be able to report. I know that the results of the election were very close indeed and that all nominees will be adding their energies and enthusiasm to the overall activities of the 'Friends' throughout the year.

Many thanks are extended to past Treasurer, Frank Armer, for his support and help to the 'Friends', and a warm welcome is extended to David Taplin of D.J. Taplin & Associates, Chartered Accountants, Kew. David will be providing guidance to our Assistant Treasurer, Mrs Louise Coronel.

Your support to all of the activities and events publicised in this edition is sought as well as your assistance to continue our growth in membership. May I wish everybody 'happy gardening' for Spring and the Summer to follow.

Frank Phillips

President

MEMBERS' ACTIVITIES FRIENDS' VISIT TO CRANBOURNE

Sunday September 25 at 12 Noon

This day trip will bring the Friends up-to-date with development at Cranbourne, the Annex to the Royal Botanic Gardens, Melbourne and is scheduled for a time when many of the heathland plants will be in flower. We will look at new lakes in the Main Development Zone, be guided through the heathland near the Trig (look-out) Point, and then inspect the new Arboretum and the road/picnic area development. Bring your walking boots!

As the Cranbourne Annex has not yet been opened to the public, the Friends are privileged indeed to have this opportunity of visiting this wonderful addition to our Parks and Gardens.

Bring your own picnic lunch, thermos, etc. and if desired, chairs and rugs.

Take your own cars or, if preferred, join the Friends' bus scheduled to leave Central Park, corner Kingston Street and Wattletree Road, Malvern at 11.30 a.m. sharp. It will return to Central Park between 4.30 and 5.00 p.m.

The No. 5 tram from the City will take you to Burke Road, Malvern.

Admission:

Car drivers and passengers:	\$ 5.00
Children under 15 years	free

Bus passengers:	\$14.00
Children under 15 years & over 4 years	\$ 8.00

RSVP by Wednesday September 21 on enclosed booking form.

Meet at the green shed (see enclosed map) at 12 noon.

VISIT OF BENALLA FRIENDS

Tuesday October 4

Three Melbourne Friends, Sylvia Churchill, Golda Isaac and Eve Brunner, were delighted to attend an inaugural meeting of Benalla residents who decided at that meeting to form a Friends of the Benalla Botanic Gardens.

A visit to the Melbourne Royal Botanic Gardens Tuesday October 4 is to be the first function of the Benalla Friends. Come and join them for a BYO picnic lunch on the Princes Lawn near the Rose Pavilion (see map in accompanying Gardens' Spring Calendar - Rose Pavilion indicated by red circle) on October 4 at 1.00 p.m. If the weather is inclement, Mrs David Churchill has kindly invited us to Gardens House.

DANDENONGS DAY TOUR

Wednesday October 5

A day in the Dandenongs is one of the Friends' special Spring tours and includes three gardens and a nursery: the private garden of Grace and Bill Maxwell (said to be one of the best private gardens on the Mount), a former private garden - Pallants Hill (The George Tindale Memorial Garden), the display garden of the Ferny Creek Horticultural Society, and the Austraflorea Nursery.

First stop will be Austraflorea, well-known for its Australian native collection, where the Friends will take a nursery production tour to see potting, propagation and plant husbandry techniques. Unfortunately there will be no time allocated for sales, but morning tea (BYO) in the display garden will give us a chance for a brief look at the permanent collection.

The Maxwell's garden at Monbulk (recently featured in the March 1988 House and garden) covers about four acres. Sloping down to a creek, many woodland plants grow along the winding paths - hostas, primulas and meconopsis. Other attractions are beds of alpines, azaleas, rhododendrons, terrestrial orchids and a wonderful collection of liliiums. The plants in this garden have been carefully selected over the years and each is the best species for the respective genus.

At Sherbrooke where we will have lunch, the Ferny Creek Horticultural Society has developed its own garden on the site of a former quarry. Carefully designed, it has many sections allowing members with different interests to work with their own special plants, ericas, callunas, proteas, dwarf conifers and a newly established rock garden as well as rhododendrons and azaleas.

Maisie James, the Society's President, will be there along with her helpers to explain it all.

Last garden for the day is Pallants Hill where Ruth Tindale will speak to the group and voluntary guides will walk us around. This is a wonderful woodland garden with a canopy of Mountain Ash and underplanting of rhododendrons and azaleas, fuchsias and hydrangeas as well as many rare shrubs and bulbs.

The early weeks of October should be prime time for Spring flowering and the gardens at their best.

The bus (or buses) will leave the Herbarium at 9.00 a.m. and return around 5.15 p.m. The cost is \$18.00 and includes transport and the entrance fee for each garden. Bring lunch and morning tea. Booking is by the enclosed form and enquiries can be made either from the Friends' room (Tuesday, Thursday, Friday 9.00 a.m. to 5.00 p.m.) 650 6398, Beth Higgs 850 5908 or Wilma Yee 876 2754. Closing date is Friday September 30.

SPRING IN CANBERRA, HUSKISSON, WOLLONGONG AND BOWRAL

Tuesday October 11 to Tuesday October 18 (inclusive)

This eight day tour in Spring will include a visit to the new Parliament House on October 11 and dinner there on October 12 - our host being Senator David Hamer. We will also visit the gardens of Government House.

From Canberra we proceed to Huskisson and visit the National Gardens Annex at Jervis Bay; on the way to and at Wollongong we see beautiful gardens and scenery before proceeding to Bowral and the Milton Park Country House Hotel which is well known to garden lovers with its many acres of landscaped garden, formerly owned by the Hordern family and now classified Relais world standard. Whilst in the Bowral area we will visit other famous gardens before returning to Canberra on October 18 p.m.

Cost of our two days in Canberra, one day in Huskisson, two days at Wollongong and two days at Bowral will be \$1,080.00. This includes return air fares to Canberra, chartered bus from arrival in Canberra on October 11 to departure late afternoon on October 18, all accommodation (twin rooms) and meals except for two lunches.

For single rooms in Canberra, Huskisson and Wollongong the cost is an extra \$126.00 for the five nights. There is no single accommodation at Milton Park in Bowral.

Numbers are limited to a group of twenty six people. Further information from Margaret MacGregor 650 6398, Eve Brunner 818 5954 or Lesley Clark 807 3984.

RSVP: The Tour Secretary, Friends of the Royal Botanic Gardens, National Herbarium, Birdwood Avenue, South Yarra, 3141 by September 20 and enclosing a deposit of \$400.00. On receipt of deposit further details will be forwarded to participants.

MS ELIZABETH SCHOLTZ

Monday October 31

The Director Emeritus of the Brooklyn Botanic Garden, New York, with some Friends of the Brooklyn Botanic Garden, will be in Melbourne for a few days and she has generously agreed to speak of her interests and work at a morning coffee function on Monday October 31 at 10.30 a.m. at the Wettenhall Room, Toorak Uniting Church, 603 Toorak Road, Toorak.

Recently a new golden hued rose has been named "Elizabeth Scholtz". This new fragrant grandiflora is yet another honour in the lengthy list of accolades Elizabeth Scholtz has received since she arrived at the Botanic Garden twenty-eight years ago to head the adult education program at Brooklyn. She became Director in 1979, becoming the first woman to head a major botanic garden.

Admission:

Members & Plant Craft Cottage Members \$5.00

Non-Members \$6.00

RSVP: October 27 - see separate booking slip

PLANT CRAFT COTTAGE INVITATION

Wednesday November 9

The Plant Craft Cottage group has warmly invited the Friends of the Royal Botanic Garden, Melbourne to morning coffee at the Cottage on Wednesday November 9 at 10.30 a.m. Convenors of the craft groups will talk of their various activities. The Voluntary Guides have offered to take Friends on a guided walk after the social occasion at 11.30 a.m. All members of the Friends are very welcome but, of necessity, numbers are limited.

Park cars along Alexandra Avenue and enter by "H" Gate.

RSVP by November 4 on enclosed form or by telephone to Margaret MacGregor, Friends' Office on 650 6398

TWILIGHT PICNIC WITH NATIONAL GALLERY SOCIETY MEMBERS

Saturday December 3

Friends of the Royal Botanic Gardens will join with members of the National Gallery Society for a Twilight Picnic on the Eastern Lawn of the Gardens from 4.00 p.m. to 8.00 p.m. on Saturday December 3. (Enter by Gate "D" in Domain Road, opposite Park Street)

The Voluntary Guides will lead walks through the Gardens between 4.00 p.m. and 6.00 p.m. and have generously offered to arrange a children's walk, with a few mums in attendance. Numbers for the walk will be limited.

The Picnic - from 6.00 p.m. onwards - will be either a BYO meal or a picnic basket (~~children's baskets will be available~~) supplied by the Victorian Arts Centre at \$12.50 (~~\$ for children~~). Bring your own thermos and cold drinks.

Note during the walks, provisions etc. may be left on the Eastern Lawn in the care of non-walking Friends. Picnic baskets, if ordered, will be available from 6.00 p.m.

As this is the first occasion on which the Friends have met with members of the National Gallery Society we are looking forward to a happy and friendly occasion.

Admission:

Adults (members only).....\$1.00

Families\$3.00

Picnic baskets\$12.50

RSVP November 29

see separate booking form.

FRIENDS' CHRISTMAS PARTY

The Friends' Christmas Dinner will be held at the Kiosk in the Gardens on Friday December 16 at 7.00 p.m. for 7.30 p.m. See separate sheet for details and booking.

RECENT ACTIVITIES

Donna Somerville - Perennial Border - 18/5/88, Division of Plants, - 1/6/88 and Perennial Border - 22/6/88

These three events were very popular - we look forward to similar events in 1989

Annual General Meeting at Merton hall on 30/5/88

Port and Dessert followed by the AGM and supper was a well attended, happy and successful evening.

Dr Charles Nelson - "The Glories of Irish Gardens" - 3/6/88 - a wonderful occasion.

Rare Botanical Books and Prints - at the State Library of Victoria on 15/6/88 - the three sessions were booked out quickly for this 'rare' occasion. We hope to arrange a similar event - perhaps in 1989.

"Nepal and the Himalayas" on 6/7/88. Despite the transport strike Mrs de Lacy Lowe's talk and slides of her trek was well attended and a delight.

Dr Sophie Ducker - "The First Botanists in Port Phillip Bay" - 28/7/88.

As to be expected informative and stimulating.

Friends of the Ballarat Botanic Gardens - members were taken on guided tours of the Royal Botanic Gardens, Melbourne by the Voluntary Guides and met with Melbourne Friends over lunch at the Kiosk on 4/5/88. Plans are in hand for the Melbourne Friends to visit the Ballarat Gardens, the Ballarat Gallery and perhaps a special private garden.

INTERESTING IRISH GARDENS

"The Glories of Irish Gardens" - the lecture and slide presentation by Dr Charles Nelson - touched on the following gardens:

Ilnacullin (Co. Cork); Garinish Island and Rossdohan (Co. Kerry); Fota (Co. Cork); Mt Congreve (Co. Waterford); Rowallane, Mt. Stewart and Castlewella (Co. Down); Malahide Castle (a.k.a. Talbot Botanic Garden, Co. Dublin); National Botanic Gardens (Glasnevin, Dublin); Trinity College Botanic Garden (University of Dublin); Heywood (Co. Laois); Kilmacurragh (Co. Wicklow) and the Guy L. Wilson Daffodil Garden (University of Ulster, Coleraine); private gardens of Dr Molly Sanderson (Co. Antrim) and of Mrs V. Dillon and Mr David Shackleton (both in Dublin).

THE FRIENDS' OFFICE

An answering device for the Friends' telephone was purchased in the middle of June. This means that Friends can ring the office and leave a message any time - day or night!

For those who prefer direct contact, Margaret MacGregor is now in the office three days a week - Tuesday, Thursdays and Fridays from 9.00 a.m. to 5.00 p.m.

The telephone number is 650 6398

CANBERRA/BOWRAL TOUR

The May 1-6 Canberra/Bowral tour, was organised by Kay Fairley and Lesley Clark. Flying to Canberra early afternoon the city was aglow with the colour of exotic trees and plants, enhanced by their contrast with the sombre May foliage of eucalypts, acacias, casuarinas and the darker toned conifers. Next morning, after breakfast at the Australian National Botanic Gardens Kiosk, we were guided on the "White arrow Walk" which features the Rain Forest Gully and the Rockery. The Gully was originally formed by erosion on a slope of Black Mountain and has been converted into a fascinating walk from South to North simulating the rain forests of Australia. The Rockery structured from Black Mountain boulders contains an interesting collection of desert and alpine plants which require specialised cultivation.

On Tuesday Professor Lindsay Prior (responsible for much of the early planning and planting of Canberra trees) took us for a 'botanical' tour of the environs. We also had a pleasant visit to the Garden of Government House where beds of new roses and masses of rhododendrons are a recent addition. We arrived for lunch at Berrima, a charming town established early in the 19th century. Here we rambled through the nursery, antique shop and court house; then our bus took us to Moss Vale where we were invited to visit 'Whitely', a Tudor style home with a large garden built in 1882 which has been completely restored by its owners, John and Robyn Hawkins. In the evening we reached Bowral and stayed at the Milton Park Country House Hotel, a beautiful old home and garden with magnificent trees.

The following day Mrs Cottee introduced us to her large garden at Burradoo which was established on 25 acres of flat land. There are many cedars, cyprusses, rhododendrons, camellias and perennials and according to Mrs Cottee 'thousands of bulbs'. In the afternoon we visited Kennerton Green, the famous garden designed by Lady Pagan and now owned by Lady Renouf.

Thursday was a memorable day with the spectacular grandeur of the escarpment of the Great Divide. We reached the fertile lowlands of the great cattle district of Illawarra, colourful with the flower of the native Flame Tree. At the base of the escarpment we visited may Barrie and her sculpture studio. From here we drove to Minna Murra National Park a remnant of the rain forest once the home of *Toona australis*, the Red Cedar.

Next day we retraced our trip to Melbourne, thankful for excellent leadership, good company and the opportunity to learn about and enjoy the nature of our land.

(Adapted from notes by Leline Burns.)

A very happy reunion of the members of the Canberra/Bowral trip in May was held at the home of Kath Johnson on Wednesday July 20. A very warm thank you to Kath for her generous hospitality.

HERBARIUM EXTENSION OPENING

The Extension to the herbarium and the new Visitor Centre are scheduled to be opened on Sunday November 20, 1988. The details of who and how are being worked out - but it will be an impressive ceremony, marking a most significant step in the development of the Herbarium and the Gardens. The Friends, among many others, are looking forward to having access to the new, impressive Hall!

THE GROWING FRIENDS

The response to our inaugural free 'Distribution of surplus seeds' was not as great as we had expected. Those who participated will be rubbing their hands in glee at the extra seeds our hard working volunteers managed to slip into the envelopes. Sincere thanks to all those Friends who helped with this repetitive task.

Work has progressed slowly on the new nursery area for the Growing Friends. We have at last finished a securely fenced area with a lovely big shade house and automatic sprinkler system. Working conditions for those involved in the potting are still somewhat primitive, but at least our plants are comfortable and safe from the ravages of the possums!

Don't forget the plant sale on Saturday November 26 - 11.00 a.m. to 3.00 p.m.

PERSONAL

Our thoughts are with our dear Council member, Mrs Golda Isaac, who is convalescing in hospital after a hip operation. We miss her happy spirit and look forward eagerly to her return among us.

John Hawker, Project Officer, Botanic Gardens, has received a Churchill fellowship which will enable him to visit England and Europe to study the assessment, conservation, restoration, management and protection of historic gardens. We are delighted he has gained this award and wish him well for a successful period overseas.

"OPEN TO VIEW"

Mr John Sales, Senior Garden Adviser to the National Trust in England and Wales, will give a lecture entitled "Open to View" on Thursday November 17 at 8.00 p.m. at the National Trust property, "Rippon Lea", 192 Hotham Street, Elsternwick. This interesting talk is being given under the auspices of The National Trust of Australia (Victoria) and the Victorian Branch of the Australian Garden History Society. Mr Sales' visit is being sponsored by the British council. Mr Sales makes management decisions about historic gardens like Hidcote, Stourhead and Sissinghurst. He will be in Melbourne as keynote speaker and guest of honour at the national Conference of the Australian Garden History Society.

Admission: \$7.00

Please note admission is by entree card only - obtainable from Mrs Lesley Barnes, 21 Winnetka Drive, Lilydale 3140 - with a stamped self-addressed envelope and telephone number, please.

(Tickets will not be posted until early November.)

HERBARIUM & GARDENS NEWS

This Spring is particularly exciting in the Gardens. On November 20 the long-awaited Herbarium extension and Visitor Centre will be officially opened. The extensions will provide much needed space for the Herbarium's priceless collection of preserved plant specimens, and will also accommodate a larger library area. The new Visitor Centre will be located on the ground floor of the existing Herbarium building. Models, photographs, illustrations and audiovisuals will be combined in an informative and inspiring display. Come and discover some of the marvels of the plant world, learn how "wild" plants have been introduced into cultivation, find out about things to see and do in the Gardens - there is something for the whole family at the Visitor Centre. Use it as a starting point for your visits to the Gardens.

In front of the Astronomer's Residence you may have noticed a roped-off area which includes some remnant *Themeda triandra* (Kangaroo Grass). Prior to European settlement the land adjacent to the Yarra River was part of an open woodland community dominated by *Bursaria spinosa* (Sweet Bursaria) and various eucalypts and acacias. Herbaceous plants formed the ground cover and included *Danthonia*, *Dianella* and *Stipa* species.

This site is currently being revegetated and will include many of the original indigenous herbaceous ground cover plants. Gardener, Anne Fitzpatrick, is co-ordinating the project and hopes to have a large percentage of the plants established within the next twelve months.

If you haven't already been to the Cacti and Succulent House now would be a good time to visit. New labels have been installed which clearly identify each plant on display. Plants are arranged according to their families and information regarding their natural distribution is included. Altogether an excellent plant display!

The second in the "Garden Notes" series has now been printed. It introduces the Perennial Border and will be available over late Spring and Summer. Pick one up as you make your way along this colourful area of the Gardens.

A new series of Gardeners' Half-hours will also begin on September 21. Join the gardeners in exploring some of the delights of their particular sections. Talks will cover roses, cacti and succulents, the Herb Garden and the Grey Garden. Details of times and meeting places can be found in the Gardens' Spring brochure.

Roslyn Semler
Interpretations Officer

'The Friends of the Royal Botanic Gardens, Melbourne Incorporated has been formed to stimulate further interest in the Gardens and National Herbarium and to support and assist them whenever possible.'