# Botanic News

FRIENDS OF THE ROYAL BOTANIC GARDENS, MELBOURNE INC.

A12827T

## SPRING 2000

## PROTECTING THE ROYAL BOTANIC GARDENS FROM THE DAMAGE CAUSED BY THE GREY-HEADED FLYING-FOX COLONY. *By Richard Barley Divisional Director, Melbourne Gardens Division*

As most Friends would be aware, the problems related to the colony of Grey-headed Flying-foxes which roost in the Royal Botanic Gardens Melbourne (RBGM) are becoming acute. Without doubt, the heritage, cultural and botanical values of the RBGM are being seriously threatened by the continued presence of the flying-fox colony. We are facing a very real threat to the RBGM's future viability and reputation as one of the world's finest botanic gardens.

The issues surrounding the flying-fox situation are complex. The main points are summarised as follows:

- The Royal Botanic Gardens Melbourne (RBGM), founded in 1846, are listed on the Register of the National Estate, are classified by the National Trust of Australia, and contain 35 trees listed on the National Trust's Register of Significant Trees. They receive over 1.7 million visits per year.
- The Fern Gully of the RBGM was established by eminent landscape designer and second Director of the RBGM William Guilfoyle during the 1870s. The Fern Gully is regarded as being of exceptional cultural significance, and is an integral component of the RBGM landscape.
- As a conservation organisation, the RBGM is actively contributing to the preservation and understanding of the world's plant biodiversity. Many plants in the Gardens are rare or threatened in the wild.
- However the status of the RBGM as a world-class botanic garden is currently compromised because of a colony of flying-foxes which have devastated the Fern Gully and up to one-third of the Gardens.
- The Scientific Advisory Committee within the Department of Natural Resources and Environment is currently considering public comments on their Preliminary Recommendation to list the Grey-headed Flying-fox as a threatened species within this state, under the Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act *1988*.

**GROWING FRIENDS SALE 7/8 October**

If the approval of the Minister for Environment and Conservation is given to the listing of the flying-fox, the future management of the flying-fox colony will become increasingly difficult.

***THE FACTS ARE:***

- Flying-foxes arrived at the Gardens in 1981, initially in low numbers. Since the early 1990s, the size of the population has been generally increasing. Peak numbers over the past two years have been around 8,000 in late summer.
- The colony is causing serious and unsustainable damage to the Gardens' trees. The flying-foxes roost mainly in the Fern Gully area, but can regularly spread to one-third of the RBGM site. In the Fern Gully alone, 32 per cent of the trees and palms show major damage, 64 per cent show general damage and 3 per cent are dead. In the wild, typically, flying-foxes roost in an area until the tree canopy is totally destroyed. Several trees in the Fern Gully have already been removed after being killed by the flying-foxes, and this is likely to happen increasingly at RBGM if the colony remains.

FIFTH BIENNIAL EXHIBITION

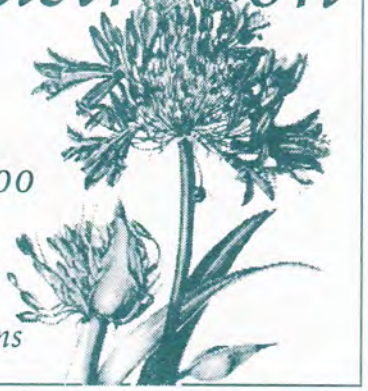
*The Art of Botanical Illustration*

*All works for sale*

*Presented by the Friends of the Royal Botanic Gardens Melbourne*

*26 October to 12 November 2000*

*10 am to 5 pm daily*
*Mueller Hall*
*Birdwood Avenue*
*Royal Botanic Gardens*



- The Fern Gully is a totally contrived environment, not a natural ecosystem. The current situation shows a dramatic imbalance between the roosting population of flying-foxes and the vegetation supporting it. This is not sustainable over the long term.
- The RBGM has obtained expert advice for many years from environmental management organisations and renowned bat scientists to develop and implement a variety of methods to disperse the colony from the Gardens. None of the methods has proved successful. Most only spread the colony (and therefore the damage) across the site and to surrounding properties, and the colony's population trend continues to rise significantly each summer.
- Scientific information currently available does not support the claim that the Grey-headed Flying-fox is in serious decline in Australia.
- Flying-foxes throughout Australia are known to be carriers of a range of serious diseases. As a result of recent information regarding these diseases, the RBGM has taken precautions to protect visitors and staff from exposure to the diseases by closing off the parts of the site where the flying-foxes are roosting.

**Community support is vital for the protection of the Royal Botanic Gardens Melbourne. If you wish to express your support please write to:**

**Protect the Royal Botanic Gardens Melbourne**
**Director, Royal Botanic Gardens,**
**Birdwood Avenue, South Yarra VIC 3141**
**Rbg@rbgmelb.org.au**

**Your views will be forwarded to the Minister for Environment and Conservation.**

*Remnant rainforest at Maclean in NSW destroyed, an example of the damage that is caused by the over-population of a flying-fox colony.*

## FROM THE PRESIDENT

The Friends of the Royal Botanic Gardens are fortunate in having Celia Rosser not only as their true and long-time Friend, but as an outstandingly talented one. It was due to her affection for the Friends that in June she suggested, to augment our funds, we might stage a reception to launch the exhibition of her 28 watercolours from the newly-published Volume III of *The Banksias*.

The occasion in Mueller Hall on 8 July was a splendid success; 200 or so enjoyed the reception, meeting Celia Rosser and seeing her wonderful botanical illustrations. It honoured this very distinguished Friend, and allowed Celia's family and friends to share this landmark in her memorable artistic career.

The generous support of invited guests and the proceeds of four separate viewings of the exhibition which Celia hosted, together with a well-supported raffle of a Banksia print generously donated by her publishers, Nokomis Publications, produced almost $10,500 for the Friends' funds.

The Council of the Friends has had a welcome addition to its membership with the advent of Richard Smith, who is already making a valuable contribution to consideration of the future direction in which the Friends should go. It is clear that a substantial increase in membership is necessary, something towards which the Council is working. We hope that as many Members as possible will attend our Annual Meeting in Mueller Hall on Monday 13 November to demonstrate support, both for the Friends and for the Gardens.

This issue of *Botanic News* has given prominence to Richard Barley's article about the serious damage caused by the flying-foxes in the Gardens. Friends who are inclined to assist the Gardens in achieving permission to take effective action to rid the Gardens of the menace are asked to write to the RBG address shown in the article above. In doing so, you will not only be expressing justified concern at the damage being done to the historic Fern Gully, but will be actively supporting the Gardens.

*cont. p.3*

Photos by D.Ironmonger

*At the* Banksias *reception:* (left) *Celia Rosser with Alex George, who wrote the text, and* (above) *on the platform with Prof. Carrick Chambers and Sir Ninian Stephen.*

Carrick Chambers, who came from Sydney for the reception, recalled visiting this unknown artist's first exhibition in 1965; three banksia paintings made such a deep impression on him that he revisited it immediately with a carload of fellow botanists from Melbourne University. A year or two later, when the Gardens' Director, Mr Dick Pescott, needed a botanical artist, Celia was located with some difficulty and commissioned to illustrate the Victorian species of banksia—a project funded by Miss Maud Gibson.

Subsequently, her *Banksia serrata* was chosen to be Australia's gift to the Royal Society in London for its tercentenary, and the commission was extended to have Celia prepare another of the same species for the Gardens. A limited edition of prints of these five Victorian banksias was then produced so that a wider audience could appreciate these beautiful paintings.

That was the little-known early history of Celia's love affair with banksias. Carrick went on to describe her employment as Science Faculty Artist at Monash University, and finally the inspired special appointment that resulted in three volumes that rank with the world's great illustrated botanical works.

## From the President (continued)

Referring to RBG projects towards which the Friends are making a financial contribution, I'm happy to report that Helen Cohn has just spent a very productive three weeks, while in England on leave, getting information for her history of the National Herbarium. At RBG Kew she found correspondence and reports, some dating back to 1927, of particular interest.

The curation of the Herbarium legume collection is proceeding well, but the long-planned de-silting of Central Lake is still awaiting the go-ahead from the Environment Protection Authority. This work is to be funded from a bequest made to the Friends by Miss Helen Johns, as is the provision of some new facilities planned at the RBG nursery.

**Ninian Stephen**

## RICHARD SMITH

Richard Smith has joined the Friends' Council, taking the place of Cathy Hossack who has returned to America. He recently retired from Australia Post after eight years as General Manager for Victoria and Tasmania, accountable to the Managing Director for the financial and operational performance of Australia Post in the two States.

Before joining Australia Post, Richard held positions with the Commonwealth Dept of Employment and Industrial Relations and with the Sperry Rand Corporation. He studied economics and psychology at London and Melbourne universities.

Richard and his wife Rosalind (a Friends' volunteer) migrated to Australia from London in 1964 and have two children. They live among the bellbirds in Blackburn, interspersed with frequent visits to renovate an old cottage and garden in Shoreham.


***The Gardens Shop – After Hours Sale***

**ONE EVENING ONLY**

**Thursday 7 September 4pm – 7pm**

***Observatory Gate***

**An exclusive opportunity for RBG staff, Melbourne and Cranbourne Friends, Voluntary Guides, members of the Plant Craft Cottage and Herbarium Volunteers.**

Fabulous merchandise, great gifts and limited edition art works will be marked at sale prices. Start your Christmas shopping early!

**The Observatory Café will be open until 7pm**

Royal Botanic Gardens Melbourne

***The Gardens Shop***
***Observatory Gate***

*No further discounts will apply to sale merchandise.*

# Spring Activities

## ANGLESEA REGENERATION

**Illustrated talk by Margaret Polmear**
**Thursday 14 September, 5.30 for 6.00pm**
**Mueller Hall, National Herbarium**

Following the wildfires of Ash Wednesday, February 1983, Angair, (a conservation group at Anglesea and Aireys Inlet), initiated a 10-year study of how the local vegetation regenerated. It was a community project and 150 volunteers participated.

Margaret will outline the project's history, describe how the vegetation has regenerated, and discuss what has been learnt from the study. The talk will be illustrated by colour slides.

Refreshments will be served from 5.30pm
Cost incl. GST: Friends: $11 Others: $16
RSVP by Monday 11 September on enclosed booking form

## *SPRINGTIME GARDEN TOUR*

**Saturday 23 and Sunday 24 September**
**Bus will leave from outside National Gallery in St Kilda Road at 9.00am sharp.**

Gardeners love to share their passion; we've arranged a bus tour that will take us to seven properties, each very different, in the western part of the State.

First to *Brenmoor* at Deans Marsh, where the synergy between plants and animal life leaves a strong impression. About 40 species of banksias, almost the same number of correas and grevilleas are among the bird-attracting plants that reward your close inspection.

*Wanawong*, south of Colac at Burtons Lookout, affords spectacular panoramic views of the Otways and has stunning terraced beds of camellias, davidia, maples, dogwoods, magnolias, redwoods, flowering cherries and crab apples. Clematis scrambles through rhododendrons, while alpines, bluebells and other bulbs occupy the lower ground.

We'll have a basket lunch here before travelling west through serene rural landscapes to Timboon where a member of the Friends, Marnie Macmillan and her dog Harold will welcome us to *Three Oaks*. Tulips and other bulbs, as well as spring blossom, should be at their best. Bird life abounds. There's a graceful grove of silver birches, and curved beds crammed with perennials, especially many salvias in strong colours. Marnie will have unusual plants that she's propagated for sale. For added pleasure, we'll have Devonshire tea here.

We'll spend the night in Camperdown at the comfortable 3-star Cascade motel, and dine at Madden's Bistro. Dinner is the only item not included in the total cost of the trip, allowing you to choose from the extensive, moderately-priced menu.

For your interest, Bob Lamble will give us a short illustrated talk after dinner about the natural and built heritage of this fascinating area, famous for its dry stone walls and volcanic cones. Bob is Past President of the Camperdown Historical Society.

**Day 2**: From first sight of its corrugated iron fence, *Wigandia*, which sits atop a volcanic cone at Noorat, asserts its individuality. William Martin has met the challenge of climate and location by concentrating on South African, South American and New Zealand evergreen 'architectural' plants. His imagination in putting this low maintenance, low water usage philosophy into practice earned him *Your Garden* magazine's title of Australian Gardener of the Year in 1999.

Just a few minutes' drive but a century away, *Dalvui* fits the image of a classic Western District heritage property. It was laid out in 1898 by William Guilfoyle. Sweeping lawns and magnificent trees — lindens, poplars, tri-colour beeches, horse chestnuts — are his legacy. More recent plantings include a walk of Golden Hornet crab apples, a tennis court of persimmons and unusual perennials.

Margaret and Noel Hanlon's garden at Colac is one with which we can easily identify. They started with a large, flat site, heavy clay soil, exposure to south westerly winds, a limited budget and total horticultural ignorance. What they have achieved, doing all the work themselves and learning as they went along, deserves our admiration. Besides now being very knowledgeable about the many rare trees and plants she grows, Margaret is one of those generous gardeners who is never happier than when plucking or uprooting cuttings to give to anyone who admires a plant! Crab apples, salvias, roses and a pergola covered with *Cobea scandens* are among many special features of this garden.

Our last garden is different again — the 3ha *Graton* at Birregurra. It's a very informal landscape, with intimate walkways revealing interest at every turn. More than 55 varieties of bamboo and 20 species of oaks are interspersed with perennials, fruit and nut trees, natives and specimen trees. There are about 400 roses, especially early hybrid tea single petal roses, historic ramblers, Alister Clark climbers and Rugosas.

We'll round off our visit here with refreshments before driving back to Melbourne, where we expect to reach the National Gallery about 5.30pm.

The top-of-the-range Mercedes-Benz coach has every feature for your safety and comfort.

**Please telephone the office (9650 6398) to indicate your interest as soon as possible; we need to confirm bookings by Friday 8 September.** We'd be happy to send you more detailed information about the trip.

Cost includes bus, accommodation, garden entries, breakfast, lunches, morning and afternoon teas and GST.
$205 per person, plus $12.50 for single supplement if required.

RSVP by Friday 8 September on booking form.

## GROWING FRIENDS SPRING SALE

Saturday 7 October 10.00am — 4.00pm
Sunday 8 October 10.00am — 3.00pm
Enter at E Gate, Birdwood Avenue

By the time this reaches your letterbox the Spring Sale will be only five weeks away. Members are welcome to come on Friday mornings beforehand but the Nursery will be closed on 29 September and 6 October as we prepare, and on 13 October as we recover. As usual a lot of work has gone into the preparation of our stock by the volunteers and we are now fortunate to have extra muscle power with the addition of more men — they now total three.

The enclosed flyer sets out details of the sale and the particular attractions waiting to be planted out into your garden. Those in charge of the Australian native section are keen to bring to your attention the lovely *Colocasia esculenta 'Fontanesiana'*. It is native to Australia and is often known as the 'violet-stemmed Taro'. It has large dark green heart shaped leaves on long dark purple stems, with cream arum shaped flowers. It requires protected shade and is drought and frost tender.

During the last few months we have spent a lot of time clearing up our site and improving the office area. A computer has been installed and we are now able to print labels and keep accurate records of our stock.

**We're always grateful to have extra help on the check-out for Growing Friends plant sales. Any Members who could assist for a couple of hours — perhaps some of our younger Friends who are office-bound on weekdays — are asked to phone the office on 9650 6398.**

## ROSES, MACEDON GARDENS AND DINNER AT ROMSEY

**Bus Trip on Saturday 14 October**
**Leaving from outside the National Gallery, St Kilda Road, at 12.30pm**

The unusual timing for this trip may allow a treat for Friends who are not available during the week.

Our first stop will be the recently established Alister Clark rose garden at Bulla. A very pretty garden beside a bluestone church, it contains 130 different named rose species complemented by a clever selection of perennials. It is run by the Bulla Garden Club and funded by the City of Hume.

At Macedon, we will view *Tieve Tara*, a recently restored historic hill station garden. This spectacular property includes wide lawns planted with specimen trees, the original garden surrounding the house with huge trees including a Douglas fir, and a crab apple walk leading to the two lakes with plantings of hostas, candelabra primula and iris. The rose garden was planted with the assistance of Susan Irving. Judith Brand has invited us for afternoon tea.

The garden at *Durrol* was well established when the original part of the house was built about 1903. It has been in the same family since 1919. Karen McKinnon will take us through her extensive garden to see its fine specimens of deciduous and evergreen trees flanking distinctive areas. Special features include a wonderful rare porcupine holly, masses of rhododendrons, and the sunken Edna Walling garden.

Our final stop will be the Cope Williams winery at Romsey where we can inspect the large walled garden designed by Anne, Duchess of Rutland. Clipped juniper marks out the flower beds of delphiniums, hollyhocks, Chinese forget-me-nots and *Allium christophii.* Roses and climbing hydrangea cover the walls. Wine tasting will be offered before dinner. We will dine in the charming Cricket Pavilion Restaurant, with wine available by the glass at additional cost.

The bus (with seat belts) will leave the National Gallery in St Kilda Road at 12.30pm sharp.
Our estimated time of return is 8.30pm.

Cost, which includes bus, garden fees, afternoon tea, a three-course dinner and GST: $70
RSVP by Friday 6 October on booking form.

**CHRISTMAS DINNER**
**Tuesday 5 December at 7.00 for 7.30pm**

This year we will celebrate Christmas together at the Lyceum Club, Ridgway Place, Melbourne.
Please note the date in your diary. The cost of $55 will cover a three-course meal, drinks and GST.
An invitation will be sent late in October.

## THE ORNAMENTAL PLANT CONSERVATION ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIA
**A talk by Lucille Strachan**
**Monday 16 October at 10.00am for 10.30am**
**Mueller Hall, National Herbarium**

The OPCAA was established in Victoria and has extended Australia-wide, with the aim of protecting and conserving both native and exotic plants. The Association encourages communication about ornamental plants and their conservation through the establishment of registered reference collections. There are currently 55 registered, plus 17 provisional, collections—eucalypts, species crocus and everything in between.

Lucille is now, after three years, the Immediate Past President of OPCAA. She is a practising horticulturist and an original Growing Friend. With her unique knowledge and passion for plants, Lucille has been an important contributor for 12 years. She will speak to us of her experiences with the Association, which occupies an office in the Observatory Building and is thus a near-neighbour of the Friends.

Tea/coffee will be served from 10.00am.
Cost: Friends $11.00 Others $16.00
RSVP by Thursday 12 October on booking form.

## *The Art of Botanical Illustration 2000*
***Opening Reception and Exhibition Preview***
***Wednesday 25 October, 6.00pm to 8.00pm***
**Mueller Hall and adjacent marquee**

**To be opened by the renowned artist and naturalist Charles McCubbin**. Charles is well known for his *butterfly* connection: as consultant to the Melbourne Zoo he was involved in setting up the butterfly house there; he designed a series of butterfly postage stamps, and was author/illustrator of the large volume *Butterflies of Australia.* There's also the inescapable *family* connection; he is a grandson of Frederick McCubbin.

***$ 20 per person; bookings essential before 20 October on enclosed booking form***

## *The Art of Botanical Illustration 2000*

**Our biennial exhibition and sale will open daily in Mueller Hall at the National Herbarium between 26 October and 12 November, 10am-5pm. Free entry.**

On display will be around 170 recent original artworks by accomplished members of the Friends' Botanical Illustrators from Victoria and interstate.

The exhibition offers an opportunity for you to buy or just view and enjoy some of the best examples of botanical art available in Australia today; they depict native and exotic plants, their flowers and fruits.

Presented by the Friends to promote the work of these talented artists and to raise funds in support of the Gardens, the exhibition will appeal to admirers and collectors of fine art as well as gardeners and plant lovers. Prices start at around $200.

A wide selection of cards by exhibiting artists will also be for sale. In addition, Celia Rosser has generously donated a framed *Banksia* print to the Friends which will be among significant prizes for a raffle.

## OUR SPRING WALK IN THE GARDENS
## *A MORNING WITH THE BIRDS*
**Tuesday 31 October at 10.00am for 10.30am**

Most appropriately, our Spring Garden Walk will be devoted to seeking out some of the more than 170 species of birds which have been recorded in the Gardens since the days of Ferdinand von Mueller. David Plant, who has a remarkable collection of the records kept by observers who have visited the RBG over many years, will lead a walk through the Gardens to see what can be found. A very experienced bird observer, David will precede the walk with a brief talk about the changes which have occurred since the early years of the Gardens. He has been, and still is, involved in several long-term bird surveys of the Gardens.

**Morning tea/coffee will be available in the Barrachi Room in the Observatory Building at 10.00am, or you can meet the group at 10.30am beside the Neutrino sculpture on the Pacific Dunlop Plaza.**

Cost: Friends $7 Others $9
RSVP by Friday 27 October on booking form

## ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
**Monday 13 November at 7.15 for 8.00pm**

Join us for a glass of wine and dessert before the meeting. The annual report and further details of this meeting will be posted by the end of October.

## MUSEUM TOUR AND LUNCH
## Wednesday 15 November at 1.00pm

We've been hearing for years about plans for the spectacular new Melbourne Museum; with an opening scheduled for 21 October, at last we'll be able to visit it! We have arranged a guided tour to introduce us to the Forest and Australian Galleries, the Bunjilaka Aboriginal Centre and other features,

after which we'll be free to stroll around in our own time.

***We will meet first at 1.00pm for a light lunch in the Balcony Café overlooking the main foyer.*** *As prices and menus were not settled at the time* Botanic News *went to press, lunch could not be included in the cost.* ***The tour commencing at 2.00pm will last a little over one hour.***
Enter from Rathdowne or Nicholson Streets. The museum is accessible by train (Parliament Station), tram (Nicholson Street and Victoria Parade) and bus (Rathdowne Street). In addition, there's street parking and Museum underground parking (enter Rathdowne Street).

Cost: $12 incl. GST
RSVP by Monday 6 November on booking form.

## BEAUTIFUL BALLARAT AND ITS HISTORIC GARDENS

**Day Tour by Bus, Wednesday 22 November**

This trip will visit the historic Ballarat Botanic Gardens, one of the oldest in the State, where a very active Friends group also runs a small Growing Friends nursery (which will be open for us). Before lunch we will visit nearby 'Mimosa Park', a house built in 1904 which was, until the mid-70s, surrounded by farmland. The spacious garden is beautifully designed and includes may well-established trees, a collection of herbaceous peonies and a citrus walk among its attractions. After lunch at the Botanic Gardens we will move on to Lal Lal House, which has been owned by the Fisken family since it was taken up in the 1830s. This garden, which overlooks and is separated from the lake by a ha ha wall, also has well-established trees; the design of the old garden can be seen through the new plantings. It is a beautiful garden in a superb position.

**The bus (with seat belts) will leave from outside the National Gallery of Victoria in St Kilda Road at 9.00am *sharp* and return by approximately 5.00pm.**

Cost (which includes morning tea, lunch and entry to both gardens, incl. GST) is $50

RSVP by Wednesday 15 November on booking form.

## THE IMPACT OF COLOUR IN GARDEN DESIGN

**Illustrated talk by Carolyn Blackman**
**Thursday 30 November at 8.00pm**
**Mueller Hall, National Herbarium**

Members who are early risers may know that Carolyn Blackman presents a gardening program on ABC Radio 774 at 6.30am on Saturdays. Others will be aware of her stunning success (with her landscape designer husband Joby) as an exhibitor at the Melbourne International Flower and Garden Show. They've won eight Gold Awards there since 1996, and were twice judged Most Outstanding Exhibit. In 1999, they received a personal award from the RHSV for Outstanding Design.

Carolyn's informal training for her future career started at the age of three. Now, 24 energetic years later, she runs Vivid Design and Vivid Promotions and has connections with the retail and wholesale horticultural industry. She undertakes design commissions for a wide range of domestic and corporate clients.

Carolyn will discuss ways of creating colour themes with flowers and foliage, and there'll be ample time for questions. Please note that this is an 8pm meeting, with supper served afterwards.

Cost incl. GST: Friends $11 Others $16
RSVP by Monday 27 November on booking form

### *THE ART OF BOTANICAL ILLUSTRATION*: POSITIONS VACANT

We are seeking volunteers:

- For sales at the exhibition; some experience preferable. Ex-Friends' Shop volunteers would be especially welcome.
- For door duty at the exhibition.
- Walkers to deliver exhibition flyers to letterboxes in local neighbourhoods and the inner city areas.
- Younger or fit members (i.e. comfortable to climb small step ladders) who could help hang the paintings on the afternoon of Tuesday 24 October and/or the following morning.

Please contact Virginia or Helen at the Friends office on 9650 6398 if you can spare us some time to help with any of these tasks. Thank you.

**Louise Coronel**
*Convener, Botanical Illustrators*

### DIANNE EMERY'S CLASSES

Term 4 classes will commence on 10 October for beginners or experienced artists.

***Introduction to Botanical Art*** one-day workshops:
Saturday 16 September OR Thursday 21 September, 10.30am—3.30pm.
All materials provided. Cost (incl. GST) $66 for Friends, $77 for others

***Two-day Workshops with Anita Barley*** *(*Theme: *Bulbs)* for artists of some experience.
Wednesday 20 September AND
Wednesday 27 September. 10.00am—3.00pm.
Cost (incl. GST): $132. Limited numbers.

Enquiries to Dianne Emery on 9523 5397.

## FRIENDS' BARGAIN SALE

We have a selection of clothing from the Friends' Shop for sale at heavily discounted prices.

**Aprons:** Dark green plasticised aprons for gardening, with pockets ($7); plasticised aprons, red or yellow, with bee or ladybird design, also dark green ($6); dark green children's ($5)

**Cotton Polo Shirts** with logo, navy, long ($20) and short sleeved ($18), men's and women's sizes.

**Cotton T Shirts**, white with fine black design ($10).

**Linen tea towels** with pink heath or black swan design ($8).

These will be available at our meetings, at the October plant sale, and from our office, Gate Lodge.
See the notice on page 3 for the sale at the Gardens Shop on 7 September. This will include some stock from the Friends' Shop such as books, candles and ornaments.

## TUESDAY ARTISTS

Artists, students and other interested Members are welcome to attend our second-Tuesday-of-the-month sessions held in the Whirling Room Studio (in the Great Melbourne Telescope building). Coffee/tea and biscuits are available from 10.30am; presentation/speaker at 11.00am. Cost per session $5.50 cash (incl GST).

**Tuesday 12 September**: Finishing paintings for exhibition, and general discussion
**Tuesday 10 October:** Anita Barley will take us to the Water Conservation Garden. We will meet Alison Rice, who will describe the plantings, then return to the Whirling Room to paint or draw relevant specimens.

**26 October – 12 November**: 5th Biennial Exhibition, *The Art of Botanical Illustration 2000* at Mueller Hall.

**Tuesday 14 November:** Post-exhibition discussion. End of year party.

### TUESDAY PAINTERS

(**The Whirly Birds**): This informal painting group will continue to meet in the Whirling Room Studio on most Tuesdays. Cost is $2.75 (incl. GST) per session. Enquiries welcome. Contact Mary Gregory 9836 8587.

### Celia Rosser Banksia Raffle

Congratulations to the winner, A Kupcis of East Malvern.
Thank you **Jo Brownell** for organising and running the raffle so successfully and to **Nokomis Publications** for selling tickets on behalf of the Friends during the exhibition as well as donating the prize.

**CONGRATULATIONS**...to Kiah Martin, RBG Senior Arborist, who has just been declared best female in the 2000 Victorian Tree Climbing Championships. She will defend her Australian title in October. Competing against men in four other events, including an aerial rescue and a speed climb to a height of 60 feet, Kiah was well up in the placings. What an asset to the Gardens!

**THANKS**...to Town and Country Gardens, who asked for Friends membership brochures for inclusion in show bags they distributed at rose pruning demonstrations.

### *Notes from Gate Lodge*

We have a newly renovated kitchen in Gate Lodge. It's wonderful to have a functional sink and clean storage cupboards. This project had been placed on hold while the RBG was waiting for a *Declaration of works exempt from permits* from Heritage Victoria. This was received in April this year. We would like to thank John Flynn from J P Flynn Builders for the minimal increase in his quote which was nearly a year old!

Another exciting development from Gate Lodge is that our web-site is up and running. Please check it out if you can at **www.frbgmelb.org.au** We are extremely grateful to Heath Rudduck from Squib for the time he has donated to this project. We are thrilled with the end result and look forward to many new Members as a result! We are also grateful to Dr Richard Kirsner, Council member, for all his assistance with both our website and email address. Please note that our email address is **friends@frbgmelb.org.au**

This is perhaps an opportune time to say thank you to our regular volunteers, Joan Murphy and Rosemary McMeekin, who give up their time to process all the bookings, membership renewals etc that come into the office each week, and Elizabeth Fincher who completes the work by filing away the membership renewal forms. As a large majority renew their membership in June, the past three months have been extremely busy. These are all vital jobs and we do appreciate their assistance. Our volunteer receptionists also continue to do a marvellous job and are always so willing to complete any tasks, however menial! Last but not least, I would like to thank our faithful band of packing volunteers who set aside their time to send out your *Botanic News* every quarter.

***Virginia Henderson***

## SPRING 2000 *BOTANIC NEWS* BOOKING FORM

**ANGLESEA REGENERATION**
**Illustrated talk by Margaret Polmear**
**Thursday 14 September at 5.30pm**

**Mueller Hall, National Herbarium**

No of Friends.....@ $11
No of Others..... @ $16

**TOTAL: $_____**

RSVP by 11/9/00

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**SPRINGTIME GARDEN TOUR**
**23 and 24 September**
**Leaving National Gallery at 9.00am SHARP**

No .....@ $205 $

I will share with
(name).....

OR Single Supp. $12.50

**TOTAL: $_____**

RSVP by 8/9/00

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**ROSES, MACEDON GARDENS AND DINNER AT ROMSEY**
**Saturday 14 October**

**Bus leaves National Gallery at 12.30pm SHARP**

No..... @ $70

**TOTAL: $_____**

RSVP by 6/10/00

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Please return the relevant section of this form with remittance and stamped self-addressed envelope to: Friends of Royal Botanic Gardens, Gate Lodge, Birdwood Avenue, South Yarra 3141. Telephone: (03) 9650 6398

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

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

_____

_____TEL. _____


## SPRING 2000 *BOTANIC NEWS* BOOKING FORM


**THE OPCAA**
**Talk by Lucille Strachan**
**Monday 16 October at 10.00am for 10.30am**

No..... of Friends @ $11
No..... of Others @ $16

**TOTAL: $_____**

RSVP by 12/10/00

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**OPENING RECEPTION AND PREVIEW**
***THE ART OF BOTANICAL ILLUSTRATION***
**Wednesday 25 October at 6.00pm**

**Mueller Hall, National Herbarium**

No .....@ $20

**TOTAL: $_____**

RSVP by 20/10/00

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**A MORNING WITH THE BIRDS**
**Tuesday 31 October at 10.00am**

No... of Friends @ $7

No... of Others @ $9

**TOTAL: $_____**

RSVP by 27/10/00

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**MUSEUM TOUR/LUNCH**
**Wednesday 15 November at 1.00pm**

No..... @ $12 **for tour**

**TOTAL: $_____**

**Please reserve ..... places for lunch**
**OR ☐ I will NOT attend lunch**

RSVP by 6/11/00

---


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_____

_____TEL. _____



## SPRING 2000 *BOTANIC NEWS* BOOKING FORM


**BALLARAT AND ITS HISTORIC GARDENS**
**Wednesday 22 November**
**Bus leaves National Gallery at 9.00am SHARP**

No.... of Friends @ $50

**TOTAL: $_____**

RSVP by 15/11/00

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**THE IMPACT OF COLOUR IN GARDEN DESIGN**
**Illustrated talk by Carolyn Blackman**
**Thursday 30 November at 8.00pm**
**Mueller Hall, National Herbarium**

No..... of Friends @ $11
No..... of Others @ $16

**TOTAL: $_____**

RSVP by 27/11/00

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***BUS TOURS: If you have to make a last-minute cancellation, you must ring 0407 335 644 (the Friends' mobile phone) on the previous evening or the morning of the tour's departure so the bus will not be delayed waiting for you.***

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

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Please return the relevant section of this form with remittance and stamped self-addressed envelope to: Friends of Royal Botanic Gardens, Gate Lodge, Birdwoo Avenue, South Yarra 3141. Telephone: (03) 9650 6398

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

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

_____

_____TEL. _____

# SPECIAL EVENTS IN THE ROYAL BOTANIC GARDENS, MELBOURNE

## SEPTEMBER 2000

**ABORIGINAL HERITAGE WALK**
Thursdays at 11.00am,
Sundays 3 and 17 at 10.30am
Groups by arrangement.

**GARDENS HIGHLIGHTS GUIDED WALK**
Sunday to Thursday, 11.00am and 2.00pm
Fridays at 2.00pm

**FLORA EXPLORER**
Special walks arranged by RBG horticultural staff and Voluntary Guides
Fridays at 11.00am:
8: Plants of New Caledonia
15: New Zealand Plants
22: Southern Chinese Collection
29 Herbs with medicinal properties
Contact: 9252 2429

**OBSERVATORY TOUR**
Sundays at 2.00pm

***THE HIDDEN FOREST* EXHIBITION**
Collage artworks by Jeannie Baker
Mon—Fri 12 noon-4.00pm; Weekends 10.00am-4.00pm
**Until 14 September**
Eastern Transit Room, Observatory Gate
Contact: 9252 2358

**PLANT CRAFT COTTAGE**
Saturday 2 September at 10.00am
Workshop: making cards with pressed flowers
Contact: Margaret 9889 7249; Patricia 9889 7999

**BRUNCH WITH THE BIRDS**
Sunday 10 September at 9.00am
Bird walk and morning tea at Terrace Tearooms, Lakeside
Contact: 9252 2429

## OCTOBER 2000

**ABORIGINAL HERITAGE WALK**
Thursdays at 11.00am,
Sundays 1, 15 and 29 at 10.30am.
Groups by arrangement.

**GARDENS HIGHLIGHTS GUIDED WALK**
Sunday to Friday, 11.00am and 2.00pm

**OBSERVATORY TOUR**
Sundays at 2.00pm

**BRUNCH WITH THE BIRDS**
Sundays 1, 15 and 29 at 9.00am
Bird walk and morning tea at Terrace Tearooms, Lakeside
Contact: 9252 2429

**PLANT CRAFT COTTAGE**
Saturday 14 October at 10.00am
Making Paper and Decorative Treasures
Contact: Belinda 9699 7873

## NOVEMBER 2000

**ABORIGINAL HERITAGE WALK**
Thursdays at 11.00am,
Sundays 12 and 26 at 10.30am.
Groups by arrangement.

**GARDENS HIGHLIGHTS GUIDED WALK**
Sunday to Friday, 11.00am and 2.00pm

**OBSERVATORY TOUR**
Sundays at 2.00pm

**BRUNCH WITH THE BIRDS**
Sundays 12 and 26 at 9.00am
Bird walk and morning tea at Terrace Tearooms, Lakeside
Contact: 9252 2429

**GARDENS HIGHLIGHTS GUIDED WALKS and OBSERVATORY TOURS do not require prior bookings except for large groups. Meet at the Visitor Centre, Observatory Gate.**

**THE NIGHT SKY EXPERIENCE:** Guided tour, Tuesday nights. **Bookings essential, as tours are heavily booked. Contact Visitor Centre re availability: 9252 2429.**

**PLEASE NOTE** ***that most events incur a charge and require prior booking. It is important that you contact the appropriate phone number. Unless otherwise noted, the number to ring for all listings is 9252 2300. Please appreciate that, after Botanic News goes to press, it is likely that additional events may be arranged for late in the quarter.***

## Notes from the Gardens

Many people labour under the illusion that winter is a quiet time in the Gardens but in fact it sees a lather of horticultural activity – from mulching to pruning, transplanting to total tree removals. If anything, advantage is taken from the opportunity of having slightly fewer visitors wandering through the site, and Gardens teams can be found throwing themselves into some of the more vigorous pursuits.

The Aloes are always a feature in mid-to-late-winter. Their bright scarlet (orange to deep maroon) flower spikes present a vivid contrast against the often dull grey skies. Some of the most impressive displays can be found around the Cycad Bed, near the newly-redeveloped Water Conservation Garden on the Eastern Lawn, or in the area of the Temple of the Winds. The wattle birds seem to love the Aloe spikes, and can be seen hanging precariously while they feed.

Speaking of the Temple of the Winds, the Gardens North and Arboriculture teams have been steadily clearing out weedy growth from below the Grey Garden and Temple area, and are well on the way towards creating a splendid horticultural display down the mudstone outcrop towards the Tan Track. The view up towards the Temple has been greatly enhanced through the removal of more weedy shrub growth from outside the RBG fence, and also by the coincidental falling of a mature elm from the roadside avenue (entirely fortuitous). The views from the Temple of the Winds out to the northerly aspects are now once again as impressive as they were when the Temple was constructed following the straightening of the River Yarra in 1901.

The camellias have produced their usual reliable winter display, with many additional cultivars and species added to the collection over the past season or so.

It will not be long before the buds of the various early-spring flowering shrubs start to open – *Corylopsis spicata* and *C glabrescens* (Winter Hazels) are always favourites among these. The magnolias are also getting their impressive flowering season under way.... and spring is just around the corner.

***Richard Barley***

**NEW MEMBERS WELCOME**

We will welcome recently-joined Members at a morning coffee and garden walk in October or November.

Those who have joined the Friends since our last Welcome in March will automatically receive an invitation. If you have been unable to attend a previous 'orientation' function and would like an invitation this time, please telephone the office on 9650 6398.

Photo by Cathy Hossack

*John Arnott, Curator of Horticulture at the Melbourne Zoo, with Ursula and Ken Webb Ware and Anita Simon during our wonderful behind-the-scenes visit on 23 May.*

## FRIENDS' BENEFITS

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

**Gills Nurseries (all branches)**
1 Centre Rd, East Brighton
390 Balcombe Rd, Beaumaris
cnr Bay/Graham Sts, Pt Melbourne
589 Glenferrie Rd, Hawthorn
5% off plants only

**Idaho Nurseries**
410 Waverley Rd, East Malvern
10% off plants only

**Bulleen Art and Garden**
6 Manningham Rd West, Bulleen
10% off plants, 5% off other goods

**Town and Country Gardens**
1280 Malvern Rd, Malvern
24 Whitehorse Rd, Balwyn
10% off everything

**The Arts Bookshop**
1067 High St, Armadale

**Holmesglen College of TAFE**
585 Waverley Rd, Glen Waverley
20% off everything

**The Gardeners Corner Store**
190-192 New St, Brighton
10% off all plants

**Collectors Corner**
Springvale Rd, Keysborough
10% off all plants

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

**Burwood Garden Patch**
1418 Toorak Rd, Burwood
10% discount

**Garden of Eden Nursery**
33 Ferrars St, Albert Park
10% off everything

**The Cottage Garden Nursery**
Cnr Macedon Ave & Doncaster Rd
North Balwyn. 10% disc, also
8 punnets for $22 (incl GST)

**Piccolo Gardens**
356-360 Punt Rd, South Yarra
10% off all items (park in Lang St)

**Banksia Hill B & B**
RMB 5349, Horsham, 3401
10% discount on accommodation

**BOTANIC NEWS is produced quarterly for Friends of the Royal Botanic Gardens, Melbourne Inc.**

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

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**Print Post Approved**
**PP 3458420025**
**ISSN No. 08170-650**

**Printed on 100 per cent recycled paper**
**Australian made**

**Printer:**
**Gill Miller Press Pty Ltd**
**110 Franklin Street**
**Melbourne Vic 3000**

## FROM THE GARDENS AND HERBARIUM

In mid-July I returned from a four-week trip to the United States and Britain, during which I visited 14 botanic gardens, mainly in California and Arizona, and also attended the first World Botanic Gardens Congress, in Asheville, North Carolina. Garden highlights for me included several cactus and succulent displays, especially the Desert Garden at the Huntington Botanical Garden in Los Angeles, the remarkable buildings and landscapes of the new Getty Center perched on a hill-top overlooking Los Angeles, and the Great Glass-house at the newly-opened National Botanic Garden of Wales, near Swansea.

My major reason for visiting other botanic gardens is to learn from their experiences and to gain comparisons with the activities and standards of the RBG in Melbourne and Cran-bourne. As on previous overseas visits, it was clear to me that the RBG at least equals – and often surpasses – the standards of overseas gardens. We compare favourably in many areas, but notably in our horticultural maintenance and pres-entation, the growth and diversity of our plant sciences programs, the size and growth of our educational and visitor programs, and our business and master-planning. These comparisons are very pleasing and reflect the great commitment and expertise of our staff and support groups. They also, of course, spur us on to do even better!

The World Botanic Gardens Congress was attended by over 1,000 people, a third of those coming from countries outside North America. The focus of the congress was on plant conservation and the vital role botanic gardens play in stopping plant extinctions, and in being influential advocates and practical demonstrators for environmentally sustainable practices. Our new Green Waste Recycling Centre is a fine example of this, as will be the rubbish recycling project in the Melbourne Gardens soon to be installed, and financially supported by the Friends.

The recent spells of mild weather have been wonderful for our visitors – but not good for replenishing water supplies! The sunshine brought thousands of people to two wonderful exhibitions at the Gardens, firstly *The Banksias* displaying Celia Rosser's superb paintings for the third and final volume of the monograph on the Banksias; and also *The Hidden Forest* by Jeannie Baker, a delightful exploration with collage of the great kelp forests along the coasts of southern Australia.

Many of these people also enjoyed the vistas, shopping and coffee at Observatory Gate – the precinct and its facilities have been an out-standing success. The latest proof of their quality and popularity is the awarding of two prizes by the Victorian Branch of the Royal Australian Institute of Architects, firstly the Melbourne Prize and secondly an Award of Merit in the institutional design category. I congratulate the architects, Peter Elliott Pty Ltd, and the builders, L U Simon Pty Ltd, for these awards.

The success of The Gardens Shop in recent years owes a great deal to the creative talents and dedication of Jenny Yunghanns. In July she decided to take a break from managing shops, so we have said goodbye to her after almost ten years on our staff. Under her guidance The Gardens Shop has grown to become a significant financial contributor to the RBG's programs, and I am most appreciative of all her achievements.

**Philip Moors**