



Spring 2009

# BOTANIC NEWS

FRIENDS of the ROYAL BOTANIC  
GARDENS MELBOURNE INC.

GROWING FRIENDS'  
PLANT SALE  
October 3 and 4



# FROM THE PRESIDENT

William Guilfoyle, who created the renowned and greatly loved 19th century landscape of the Melbourne Botanic Gardens, retired from his position as Director of the Gardens one hundred years ago, in September 1909. He had been Director for 32 years and during that time, and making full use of his considerable horticultural knowledge and landscaping skills, brought his genius to bear in remodelling the Gardens. Utilising his predecessor Baron Ferdinand von Mueller's diverse plant collection, he moved a large number of semi-mature trees to new positions, established broad sweeping paths and undulating lawns, built the reservoir and rockeries and made the ornamental lake the focal point of his creation. The end result of this considerable remodelling was the very special place of magnificent beauty and botanical significance which millions of people have visited and enjoyed over the years.

The legacy inherited from Guilfoyle is to be treasured and the Friends look forward to continuing their support of the RBG in protecting and nurturing it. We can only do this if we have the support of a large and active membership, and we encourage you if you are not already a Member of the Friends to join us soon and encourage your friends to join us too!

For information about joining the Friends and the volunteer opportunities we have to offer, please visit our website [www.rbgfriendsmelbourne.org](http://www.rbgfriendsmelbourne.org) or our office located in Gate Lodge, Birdwood Avenue,

Melbourne or (03) 9650 6398.

At the end of July, Juliana Horsfall stood down as Convener of the Growing Friends, a role which she had undertaken with great enthusiasm and skill for three years. Being Convener of the Growing Friends involves an extremely heavy workload as well as many challenges. Not least of these for Julie was the re-organisation of the Growing Friends' nursery and the replacement of the 'Mouse House' with a splendid new portable building, the 'Grouse House'. Our warm and appreciative thanks go to Julie for all she has done. We're delighted that Michael Hare, a Member of the Growing Friends since March 2007, has taken over as convener and we wish him well.

The nursery is bursting at the seams at the moment with beautiful plants ready for the Spring Sale on 3 – 4 October.

I look forward to seeing many Members and Friends there!

I also look forward to seeing many Members at the Friends' Annual General Meeting, to be held on Monday 16 November at 8.00pm in Mueller Hall. A highlight of the evening will be the announcement of the winner or winners for 2009 of the Friends' Scholarship for Royal Botanic Gardens Board Staff.

*Janet Thomson, President*

*At left: John Patrick with Friends' Steering Committee member Golda Isaac, and Steering Committee Chairman, Beth Higgs, at his recent talk on the gardens of Japan.*



Photo: Cathy Trmca

## Notes From Gate Lodge

We are grateful to our Members for their continuing support of the various events planned each quarter. The Fit Friends' Rambles and Insiders' Walks are always very popular, but because these are limited-number occasions, they are usually booked out quite quickly and there is often a lengthy waiting list. If you have made a booking and find that you are unable to come, please, out of consideration to fellow Members, be sure to let the Friends' office know as far in advance as possible. This will allow us to contact a person on the waiting list and offer them the place in good time. Of course, we realise that sometimes

emergencies do arise at the last minute, or that someone may suddenly be feeling unwell on the morning of the event. Even so, it is always worth ringing the office (9650 6398) first thing in the morning or contacting the Events mobile number (0407 335 644) just in case someone may be ready and waiting to go. Please remember; it's such a pity to waste a place and have someone else lose the opportunity of taking part.

Do we have your current email address? If you have a new address or if you are now using a different one, please advise the office by email at: [friends@rbgmelb.org.au](mailto:friends@rbgmelb.org.au).



Photo: Janet Thomson



# FROM THE GARDENS AND HERBARIUM

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Front cover: Insect-eating *Sarracenia leucophylla* hybrid.

Back cover: Daffodil

Photos: Jennifer Marshall

Please note that the Wattle on the front cover of the Winter issue was incorrectly named. It was *Acacia podalyriifolia*, the Mount Morgan Wattle photographed on a nature strip and unfortunately no longer in existence.

## Annual General Meeting

The Friends' Annual General Meeting will commence at 8.00pm on Monday 16 November 2009.

Nominations for Council may be made by obtaining a nomination form from the Friends' office. Council members are elected for two years. This year Richard Kirsner (Vice-President), Richard Smith (Secretary), Susan Brookes, John Goodwin and Judith Jarman (Ordinary Members) are due to retire. All are eligible for re-election.

Nominations are to be lodged with the Secretary at Gate Lodge by Friday 16 October.

## Guilfoyle's Volcano Project

Walkers through and past RBG Melbourne will have been watching with interest the activities of contractors working on Guilfoyle's Volcano – the old water reservoir near C Gate dating from 1876. The first stage of works has involved lifting the first twelve courses of bluestone blocks lining the bowl of the 'volcano'. These sections were shown to be leaky during tests, and so they are being lifted and a clay lining seal put in place, after which the blocks will be re-set in the original style. Paths and rock-work on the flanks of the volcano are being laid out as part of the creation of landscaping and public access to this previously hidden part of the Gardens.

The construction works are due for completion in Spring, when planting will commence ahead of the public opening in the first quarter of 2010. This exciting project has been made possible by major grants from The Myer Foundation, the Friends of RBG Melbourne, and several local donors – we're most grateful to them all!

## Links with Korea

In recent years, the RBG has been seeking to assist the development and activities of botanic gardens in the Asia-Pacific region. In 2008, I visited the Korea National Arboretum, the major national public garden in South Korea and part of the Korea Forest Service. It holds the National Herbarium, has about 30 research staff, and provides educational

programs for schools and the community. The Arboretum is now in the early stages of creating a major display of Australian flora in one of its conservatories (Korean winters are too severe – temperatures regularly fall to below minus 15°C – for most Australian plants to survive outside!), and in June we hosted a delegation from the Arboretum to see the Australian Garden.

Led by the Director-General of the Arboretum, Dr Kim Yong-ha, the delegation's three members were particularly keen to see the landscapes and plant diversity in the Australian Garden and to gain ideas for their new displays and associated educational programs. Dr Kim and I signed a Memorandum of Understanding between the RBG and the Arboretum to support future collaboration in areas such as research, conservation and staff exchanges. The group was excited and impressed by the Australian Garden and is now keen to investigate how our expertise can assist the



Signing the MoU with Dr Kim Yong-ha.

Arboretum's project.

Other new displays of Australian plants are planned in South Korea, notably in association with the construction of the new national capital, so the development of links with RBG Melbourne – and RBG Sydney, which the delegation also visited and signed an MoU with – are timely. The two national Governments have designated 2011 a bilateral 'Year of Friendship' and the Arboretum's new display is planned to open during that year.

*Dr Philip Moors, Director and Chief Executive, RBG.*

Below: The entrance to the Korea National Arboretum.

Photos: With thanks to Dr Philip Moors and Luke Saffigna





## Association of Friends of Botanic Gardens Inc.

Victoria has about 25 regional botanic gardens, many established thanks to the prosperity created by the gold rushes of the 1850s and the support of Baron Ferdinand von Mueller, the first Government Botanist in Victoria and the first Director of the Botanic Gardens in Melbourne. Mueller supplied many of the new gardens with exotic plant material as part of his acclimatisation program. His legacy is a very significant collection of mature trees (often conifers) in these gardens today.

In 1985, for Victoria's 150th anniversary celebrations, and to acknowledge Mueller's outstanding contribution to botany and horticulture in Victoria, fifteen botanic gardens were given much needed and long overdue assistance for rejuvenation by 15 German/Australian companies.

One of the stipulations for this grant was that botanic gardens had an associated group of Friends to act as future watchdogs for the gardens. This led to the formation of many Friends' groups in Victoria at that time. Other Friends' groups in Victoria and interstate had already been

established. The Friends of the Adelaide Botanic Gardens were the first in 1977, followed by the Melbourne and Sydney Friends in 1982. The Friends of the Geelong Botanic Gardens was founded in 1985 and subsequently the Friends of the Australian National Botanic Gardens Canberra (1990) and Friends of Kings Park, Perth (1993).

Early in 1991, the Friends of the Royal Botanic Gardens Melbourne invited representatives of botanic gardens

led to the incorporation of the Association of Friends of Botanic Gardens (Victoria) Inc. in January 1993. The aim of the Association of Friends was to continue to hold annual conferences and publish a newsletter, *Campsis*, twice a year for the benefit of members which then numbered eighteen. Where possible, the Association has also provided support to, or acted as an advocate for, members.

Conferences, which are now held every second year, are

other gardens and their operations. These conferences, which are open to all with an interest or involvement with botanic gardens, are always stimulating and friendly occasions. The next conference is to be held by the Friends of the Australian Inland Botanic Gardens, Mildura on 21-23 May 2010.

In 2001, the Association of Friends of Botanic Gardens (Victoria) Inc. became a national body, the Association of Friends of Botanic Gardens Inc. It now has 46 members from every Australian state and territory and one member from New Zealand and is an associate member of the Botanic Gardens Australia and New Zealand Inc (BGANZ).

The Melbourne Friends have been represented on the Association's Committee since 1993. Our former Secretary, Lawrence Cohn, was Secretary of the Association from 1993 until 2005. I am the current representative, having been elected to the Committee in 1999.

*Janet Thomson*



*The AFBG Committee, pictured standing in front of a picture of the Albury Botanic Gardens from L - R*

*Betty Lindsay, Benalla; Elizabeth Gilfillan, Ballarat; Annie McGeachy, Geelong; Caro Webster, Sydney; President Alex Smart, RBG Cranbourne; Janet Thomson, RBG Melbourne; Patricia Bannatyne, Orange; Warwick Wright, ANBG, Canberra*

*Absent: Amanda King, Warrnambool; Ken Mansell, Australian Inland Botanic Garden, Mildura.*

throughout Victoria to a seminar to discuss matters of common interest. Some who attended were friends, some represented local authorities. The seminar was so successful that another was held in Melbourne the following year. There was strong support for the establishment of an umbrella organisation and this

hosted by a different Friends' group each time. The conferences have allowed the hosting group the chance to involve appropriate local authorities, obtain significant speakers, organise workshops, create wonderful opportunities for networking with other friends' groups, garden managers and staff, and view

(The above article is based on a paper written by Jayne Salmon OAM, Immediate Past President, Friends of the Geelong Botanic Gardens, for the BGANZ Congress in October 2003).



# GROWING FRIENDS

Photo: Richard Kirsner



Outgoing convener, Julie Horsfall

As you read this the Autumn Plant Sale is well behind us. The decision to hold the sale for the first time in early May was vindicated by the financial result. It was a series of outside circumstances that caused us to choose such a late date, but the weather, a long hot summer and a rare rainy week before the sale, worked in our favour.

After the sale, it is the custom of the group to take the next Friday 'off work' and have a social gathering. This autumn, as shown in the photos, we went to the Maranoa Gardens in Balwyn. This old established

Australian Native Botanic Garden was a particular treat. Special thanks to Paul Birch, of the Boroondara Council, and his assistant for giving us a guided tour of the gardens and also for lending us their office verandah (with tables) for the traditional 'bring a plate' luncheon. We had a very happy day, and have arranged to exchange cuttings.

There have been some significant 'comings, goings and changes' in the personnel at the nursery this year.

On 31 July, Michael Hare took over as Convener. The next Growing Friends page will introduce him to you. We also had a significant retirement. Dorothy Smith, a member of the group for more than twenty years, and leader of the Succulent Plants section of the nursery, has decided to retire. Thank you, Dorothy, for your outstanding contribution to the welfare of the Growing Friends, not the least of which has been the donation of several most beautiful, handcrafted, framed tapestries. Whenever a tapestry has been offered as a prize for our plant sale, raffle tickets



Group photos: Julie Horsfall

have been much easier to sell. Please note that Dorothy has left us with a new piece, waiting to be won at the Spring Plant Sale on 3 – 4 October.

We continue to miss Lydia Bartlett, who is still recovering from her illness of last year, and Linda Floyd, the leader of the Australian Native section of the nursery, fell and broke her hip in late May. Linda is still recovering and unable to join us on Fridays. These significant absences leave large gaps in the 'corporate memory' and horticultural knowledge of the group.

We are also missing the energetic presence of Meg Miller who devotes her 'Friends' time' to the production of this magazine and other Friends' publications and no longer joins us on a Friday. Thank you, Meg.

We welcome three new members, however. Rosia Pasteur joined us in January, Margi Petzke in May and Judy Firkin in July.

I take this opportunity, with the backing of our four male stalwarts, to put out an SOS for a knowledgeable, and energetic man, available on

Fridays, to be the next member of the Growing Friends. Just contact the Friends' office and leave your name and details.

The nursery is a truly co-operative venture. Every member brings some special talent to the success of the whole. Members may join, thinking of what the group can teach them, but they invariably end up giving more than they expected to, and enjoy doing so.

I didn't join with the intention of being the Convener, but have had a most interesting three years in the job.

15 September, 2006, when I took over, seems but a minute ago. My thanks to the helpful FRBG office staff for their cheerful, willing support and to all the members of the Growing Friends who offered me great assistance. I am looking forward to my time now as an ordinary member.

So over to Michael Hare, who will be in charge at the Spring Plant Sale on Saturday 3 and Sunday 4 October which is also the RBG Spring Open Day.

*Juliana Horsfall, Convener*







## New Members' Welcome

Tuesday 22 September at 10.00am  
Mueller Hall, National Herbarium  
Birdwood Ave, South Yarra  
COST: Free  
RSVP by Friday 18 September

Please join us for the New Members' Welcome!  
Invitations will be sent to all recently-joined Friends to come to our next 'Getting-to-know-

you' gathering. Morning tea will be served while you mingle and meet other new members. Learn about the Friends' wide range of activities in a friendly and relaxed atmosphere with conveners of all Friends' groups on hand to provide information. The morning finishes with a special tour of the Gardens conducted by an expert Voluntary Guide.

We look forward to meeting all those who have joined the Friends since our last Welcome,

and those who have already requested an invitation to a morning Welcome. If you have not been able to attend a previous New Members' Welcome and would like to come this time, you are warmly invited as well, so please call our office on 9650 6398 and we'll make sure your name is included on the list.



## Gardening with the Gods

**ILLUSTRATED TALK BY  
MICHELE ADLER**

Thursday 24 September  
at 10.00 for 10.30am  
Mueller Hall, National Herbarium  
COST: \$25 Friends \$15  
RSVP by Friday 18 September  
on enclosed booking form or  
download a booking form from the  
Events page on our website:  
[www.rbgifriendsmelbourne.org](http://www.rbgifriendsmelbourne.org)  
Morning tea will be served before  
the talk.

Michèle's career in horticulture spans over 25 years as a lecturer in Horticulture at the University of Melbourne's Burnley campus. She is also a journalist, author and radio presenter in Melbourne. Michèle's passion is experiencing plants in their natural environment and this has led her to many wild places in the world, both for work and for sheer pleasure.

In 2009, Michèle will conduct the first gardening

workshops in the Sacred Valley, Peru, near the ancient Inca city of Machu Picchu, because of her interest in Andean medicinal and ancient food plants. The workshops are based at a hotel with stunning ornamental gardens and an extensive kitchen garden.

These workshops will be the subject of her talk.



## Landscape to Lexicon

The taxonomic naming of Australian plants across two centuries

**ILLUSTRATED TALK BY  
DR LINDEN GILLBANK**

Wednesday 30 September, 6.00 for 6.30pm  
Mueller Hall, National Herbarium  
COST: \$25 Friends \$15  
RSVP by Friday 25 September  
on enclosed booking form or  
download a booking form from the  
Events page on our website:  
[www.rbgifriendsmelbourne.org](http://www.rbgifriendsmelbourne.org)  
Refreshments will be served before  
the talk.

A universal lexicon of plant names allows us to discuss plants unambiguously across geographic and linguistic boundaries. As Europeans explored, mapped and invaded first coastal and then inland Australia, botanists tried to fit the strange (to European eyes) flora into European-derived taxonomic systems and established new species and genera, sometimes in association with botanical art.

Dr Linden Gillbank is an historian of Australian botany. She will use exquisite botanical art to provide glimpses of the history of the scientific naming of Australia's unique flora. Artists from Pierre-Joseph Redouté and Ferdinand Bauer to Margaret Stones and Celia Rosser will guide our journey across two centuries of Australian botanical history.





## Self-Drive Spring Ramble

### IN THE GRAMPPIANS 3 DAYS, 2 NIGHTS IN HALLS GAP

Saturday 3 October to Monday 5 October

Cost: \$330 twin share, \$298 triple share, add \$119 to twin for single supplement - MEMBERS ONLY

Full details are available at Friends' Office. Phone: 9650 6398

Meet at Domain House on Friday 18 September at 10.00am for morning tea to finalise financial arrangements and receive all information and maps required.

RSVP by Friday 11 September.

In Western Victoria's dramatic Grampians, wildflowers transform the mountains and valleys into a floral wonderland from late winter to early summer.

After arrival at our very comfortable Halls Gap motel, little driving will be necessary. After lunch we will visit the Hall's Gap Wildflower Exhibition which includes flora from the whole Grampians district. Afterwards, from the Mount William carpark, we'll climb to view the Mt William and Serra

Ranges at sunset. The next day we will enjoy the displays and films at the Brambuk Centre. We will then visit the Silverland Falls and later have a picnic before setting off on the Wonderland Walk to the Pinnacle. On the third day well-informed local guides will lead two walks, one concentrating on orchids. Neither walk is long nor difficult but reasonable fitness is required.

*Photo: Bette Devine. Thanks to Victorian National Parks Association.*

Penny Woodward



## Book Launch

### GROWING EASY HERBS FOR BEAUTY, FRAGRANCE AND FLAVOUR

BY PENNY WOODWARD

Wednesday 7 October at 6.00 to 7.30pm

Mueller Hall, National Herbarium.

COST: \$10 but bookings essential.

RSVP by Friday 2 October

on enclosed booking form or download a booking form from the Events page on our website:

[www.rbfriendsmelbourne.org](http://www.rbfriendsmelbourne.org)

Refreshments will be served during the launch.

Stephen Ryan will be launching Penny Woodward's latest book on herbs. Herbs are so easy to grow and use that they should be seen in every garden and on every balcony and patio.

A Science graduate in Botany and Zoology, Penny has had more than two decades of involvement with herbs, writing six popular books, and publishing many articles and photographs in magazines and newspapers, running her own successful herb nursery and

speaking on talkback radio.

Fran Gilbert became interested in botanical art after her retirement as an art teacher. The line drawings that illustrate two of Penny Woodward's books were her first major commissions. She has worked with other botanical artists at the Friends of the Royal Botanic Gardens, and her paintings have been shown in galleries and exhibitions around Australia.



## Spring Talking Plants

### SPRING COLOUR IN THE GARDEN WITH SPECTACULAR IRIS

Friday 16 October at 10.00am

Baldwin Room, Observatory House.

COST: \$15 Friends \$10

RSVP by Wednesday 14 October

on enclosed booking form or download a booking form from the Events page on our website:

[www.rbfriendsmelbourne.org](http://www.rbfriendsmelbourne.org)

Refreshments will be served during the morning.

Plants available for sale from the Iris Society of Victoria after the talk.

Iris enjoy a wide range of growth conditions which make them an ideal inclusion in the garden. Bearded Iris flower during the months of September, October and November. There are many other varieties of iris available and some of these will be discussed during the morning. Iris grow in full sun and part shade and many are drought tolerant once established. Due to extensive plant breeding, the size, colour and range of iris now available is very extensive.

A knowledgeable person from the Iris Society of Victoria will be present and will show many exquisite flowers and give us some hints on cultivation. Those attending are invited to bring some favourite iris flowers to show and share. Following the discussion there will be an opportunity to visit the Growing Friends' Nursery for plant purchases. Spring is a perfect time for planting.





## Spring Walk

### VISIT COMO HISTORIC HOUSE AND GARDEN

Wednesday 21 October at 10.00am  
Meet at the Gate House entrance, cnr Williams Road and Lechlade Ave, South Yarra. Melways Map M 2M, D5  
COST: \$25 Friends \$20  
Includes morning tea.  
This is a limited number event.  
RSVP by Tuesday 13 October on enclosed booking form or download a booking form from the Events page on our website  
[www.rbgfriendsmelbourne.org](http://www.rbgfriendsmelbourne.org)

Experience the National Trust's Como Historic House built around 1847 and later to become the stately home of the prominent Armytage family. With a guide we will tour the interiors filled with the original collection of furnishings. After morning tea in the charming Bursaria Café, Duncan Cuthbert, Head Gardener, will take us through the extensive Victorian gardens including the Fountain Terrace, Croquet Lawn and the practical

vegetable garden. Compare the William Sangster design – trees with their mature canopy (the last remaining plantings of the 1860s) and the picturesque arrangement of paths and plantings – with the 1960s design of the Ellis Stones Garden.

Note that this is a strictly limited number event so please book early.



## Spring Guided Visit TO THE GROWING FRIENDS' NURSERY

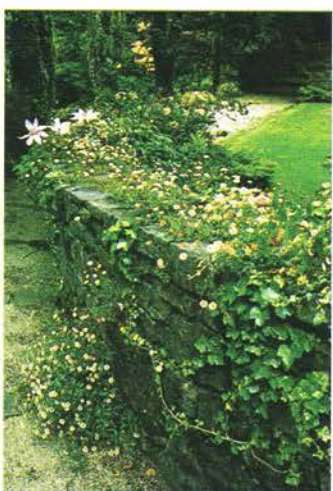
Friday 13 November at 10.00am  
Meet at Gate Lodge (opposite Shrine)  
COST: \$5 MEMBERS ONLY  
RSVP by Wednesday 11 November on enclosed booking form or download a booking form from the Events page on our website:  
[www.rbgfriendsmelbourne.org](http://www.rbgfriendsmelbourne.org)  
Bookings are essential as numbers will be limited.

Late Spring is an ideal time to put in some new plantings ready for Christmas, particularly as our nursery currently holds a wide selection of material for the home garden.

This visit is especially suitable for new members and others who are not familiar with the whereabouts and workings of our Growing Friends' Nursery. We will gather at Gate Lodge for morning tea and the

opportunity to meet other like-minded gardeners, and then be guided down to the Nursery.

If you plan to buy a number of plants, think about bringing some strong carry-bags or your market trolley to help take your purchases home.



## Self-Drive Visit to Bickleigh Vale

Wednesday 18 November  
Meet at 10.00am at 5 The Sheilaw, Bickleigh Vale Road, Mooroolbark, Melways Map 51, K2.  
Park in Pembroke Road.  
COST: \$35  
RSVP by Tuesday 10 November on enclosed booking form or download a booking form from the Events page on our website:  
[www.rbgfriendsmelbourne.org](http://www.rbgfriendsmelbourne.org)

We have received a warm invitation to visit six enchanting gardens, the surviving creation of landscape designer Edna Walling.

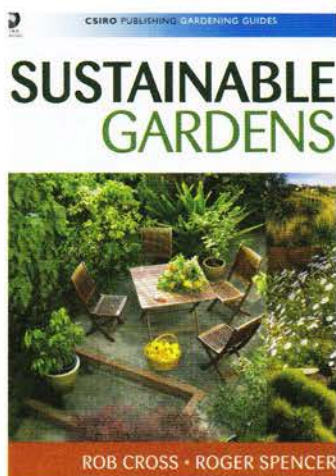
In the 1920s, she transformed 10 hectares of paddock into a village modelled on her childhood home in Devon, England. Walling made her home here, designing charming timber and stone cottages with names such as Badger's Wood, Downterry and The Barn. These nestle in

leafy gardens of native and exotic plants framed by eucalypts, pine, maples, Irish strawberry trees and crab apples.

We will visit a community of gardens with mossy paths, hidden ponds and ivy-covered tree houses. Each property is divided by unobtrusive fences and most are linked by gates – an absolute haven in the midst of suburbia.

Sturdy walking shoes are recommended.





## Sustainable Gardens

**ILLUSTRATED TALK BY  
ROGER SPENCER AND  
ROB CROSS**

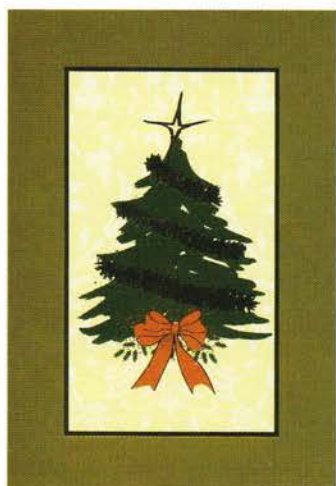
Tuesday 24 November  
at 10.00am for 10.30am  
Mueller Hall, National Herbarium  
COST: \$25 Friends \$15  
RSVP by Thursday 19 November  
on enclosed booking form  
or download a booking form from  
the Events page on our website:  
[www.rbgfriendsmelbourne.org](http://www.rbgfriendsmelbourne.org)

Roger Spencer and Rob Cross, horticultural botanists at the National Herbarium of Victoria, and authors of *Sustainable Gardening*, find this important subject has attracted media attention.

In this talk they will expand on why we need to be sustainable gardeners and to harmonise human activity with the cycles of nature, upon which we all depend, working from the individual through to the global levels of human

organisation. Could we start with this list? Garden design, water and soil management, food and flower gardening, sustainable landscapes, use of chemicals, permeable paving and rain gardens.

The challenge for our generation is to lay the foundations for a sustainable future and gardeners can play their part. This talk will be full of information and a great inspiration to us all.



## Advance Notice

**CHRISTMAS COCKTAILS  
AT GARDENS HOUSE**

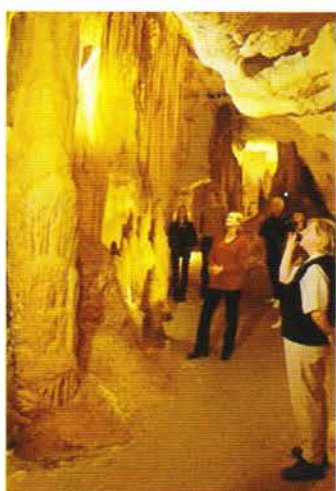
Wednesday 9 December 2009  
from 6.00pm to 8.00pm  
COST: To be announced.  
Booking details will be available in the  
next newsletter which accompanies  
the Annual Report.

Please make a note in your diaries that the Friends will be returning to Gardens House for their Christmas celebration this year. Gardens House is the charming early Nineteenth Century former Director's private residence tucked away behind the National Herbarium. It provides the handsome architectural backdrop to the perennial border.

We are delighted to be able to offer our Members and friends an opportunity to enjoy

this hidden corner of the Botanic Gardens which will be decorated for Christmas with flowers and foliage from the Gardens.

Join with new Members, friends and committee members in this beautiful setting to celebrate the end of another busy and successful year of Friends' support for the Gardens.



## Friends of the RBG Cranbourne

**LOWER GLENELG  
NATIONAL PARK (LGNP)  
AND THE LIMESTONE  
COUNTRY**

### 4-day bus trip

Saturday 31 October to  
Tuesday 3 November 2009  
COST: \$560 pp twin share (single  
supplement \$165)  
Includes comfortable bus tour  
(Melbourne to Melbourne), lunches  
each day and one dinner (Nelson

Hotel and Barn Steakhouse not included), tea and coffee, all entries, accommodation and breakfasts. Meet at Southern Cross bus depot to board bus for 8.00am departure on Saturday 31 October.

We arrive back at Southern Cross Station bus depot at 6.00pm on Tuesday 3 November.

Come with us to the south-western corner of Victoria, with its limestone cave system and its renowned diversity of flora and fauna. We plan a full and varied long weekend, visiting the LGNP (which

protects over 700 species of native plants – of forest, swamp, river, dune and cliff association) and other nearby places of interest.

For information and itinerary contact:  
Susan Funder Phone 5281 7569  
[susanfunder@live.com.au](mailto:susanfunder@live.com.au)

*Photo of Princess Margaret caves  
courtesy of Parks Victoria.*



# EVENTS



## BotanicAsia

9 - 25 October inclusive,  
from 10.00am to 5.00pm daily.  
Domain House, Dallas Brooks Drive.  
COST: Gold coin entry.

### ASSOCIATED PROGRAMS

#### Guided Walks through the exhibition with one of the artists on:

Saturday 10 October at 11.00am;  
Wednesday 14 October at 2.00pm;  
Sunday 18 October at 11.00am;  
Friday 23 October at 2.00pm;  
Sunday 25 October at 2.00pm;  
COST: \$15.00

Bookings essential on 03 9429 5666  
susiehamson@hotmail.net.au

#### Guided walks and talks through the Gardens featuring the exhibition and the Southern Chinese Collection on:

Saturday 10 October at 2.00pm;  
Wednesday 14 October at 10.00am;  
Sunday 18 October at 2.00pm;  
Friday 23 October at 10.00am;  
Sunday 25 October at 10.00am.  
COST: \$15 Concession: \$13  
Bookings essential on 03 9252 2429

#### Opening Night with Peter Valder AO

Thursday 8 October at 6.00pm.  
COST: \$60 includes catalogue.  
RSVP to 03 9429 5666 or  
susiehamson@hotmail.net.au

**Proceeds** from entry fee, catalogue sales, commissions and merchandise will be donated to the RBG. For more information see [www.botanicasia.com](http://www.botanicasia.com)

This exhibition will feature seven artists, all Members of the Friends, long associated with the Royal Botanic Gardens, Melbourne. Their work has often been inspired by the Asian plants and influences which have become so much a part of Australian life. Painted and drawn works will be for sale and all the artists have created a 'Peony' artwork, as well as works pertaining to an Asian botanical theme of their choosing. The working drawings for these pieces will also be on show, allowing an insight into the artists' work processes. Featured artists include Anita Barley, Dianne Emery, Dolores Skowronski-Malloni, Fiona McKinnon, Mali Moir, Rita Parkinson and Jenny Phillips together with guest artist from Japan, Noriko Hasegawa. Rare works, some never publicly viewed, by Celia Rosser and Margaret Stones, will accompany the show.

The exhibition will preview over the RBG Spring Open Day weekend on Saturday 3 and Sunday 4 October, between 10.00am and 5.00pm.

**Please note the specific booking numbers for this exhibition. This event is not organised by the Friends and bookings may not be made at the Friends' office.**

In the mid 1980s, the Friends of the Royal Botanic Gardens Melbourne really started the keen interest that there is in Melbourne today in Botanic Art. Not long after the founding of the Friends, it was decided to mount a Botanical Art Exhibition. This consisted of work by Stan Kelly (whose paintings of eucalyptus were given to the State Botanical Collection) and by Anita Barley, who, at that time, was the illustrator at the Herbarium. Then followed an exhibition of Jenny Phillips' paintings and Colin Woolcock's work, also part of the State Botanical Collection held in the National Herbarium of Victoria.

Soon afterwards, John Patrick, who was teaching at Burnley, invited Anita to teach a course of Botanical illustration for his course *Discovering Horticulture*. When that class was cancelled, some of the students, including Louise Coronel, set up a monthly meeting at the RBG called the *Botanical Art Workshops*. The aim was to support and encourage artists wanting to work in the tradition of botanical illustration and flower painting. The workshops provided a venue for people to show and discuss their work – the positive criticism of others being a most important factor in developing mastery of

a difficult and exacting genre. During 1990, two of Australia's gifted botanical artists, Celia Rosser and Jenny Phillips, each attended a Workshops day and from 1991 Anita taught there regularly. Participants brought examples of their work to show and to explain their working technique. In the mid 1990s, Louise asked Jenny Phillips to teach for the Friends. She did this for several years before moving on to open her own school, the Botanical Art School Melbourne.

Dianne Emery then became a teacher for the Friends. As popularity of the art form grew, she was joined by Herbarium illustrator Mali Moir and together they continue to teach classes at the RBG.

In 1992, Louise Coronel started the biennial *Art of Botanical Illustration Exhibition* which has continued to grow in size, quality and stature.

BotanicAsia allows us to see a concentration of exceptional talent on show in this exhibition, and some previously unseen early masterpieces by Celia Rosser and Margaret Stones, legends of Victoria's masters.

*The Peonies (detail) depicted above, from left to right, were painted by Jenny Phillips, Dianne Emery, Anita Barley and Dolores Skowronski-Malloni.*



# MEMORIES



Manager, Friends' office, Virginia Henderson with cake, Janet Thomson (President) and Lawrence Cohn at his 90th birthday celebration.



Council member and Volunteers co-ordinator John Goodwin



One-time Assistant Treasurer Jean Woodger.



Dr Robin Sharwood, Frank Phillips (first President of the Friends) and Lawrence Cohn, longtime Trustees of the Friends' Trust Fund.



Dr Robin Sharwood, Chairman of the Friends' Trust Fund



Former Vice-Presidents Durham Smith and David Plant.



Lawrence with former Vice-President Lesley Clarke.

Photos on this page were taken at a small gathering held to celebrate Lawrence Cohn's 90th birthday. Those present were Councillors and long-standing Members of the Friends with whom Lawrence worked during his time as Secretary from 1983 to 2001. Thanks to Vice-President Richard Kirsner for the photography.



Golda Isaac, Steering Committee member, Heather Ironmonger, former Vice-President and Editor of Botanic News, Beth Higgs, Founding Chairman, and President, Janet Thomson.



Friends' Administrative Officer, Marguerite Hancock, and Councillor Judy Jarman.



I was recently travelling down the Hume Highway in the evening, having attended a botanic garden meeting in Benalla. The Hume Highway when viewed at night does not have a reputation for its scenic delights, for obvious reasons. The changes in direction, when at last they appear, are not curves in the road in the classic driving sense, so much as mild realignments that suggest a slight adjustment of the tiller by a degree or so. This is no doubt all well and good for the drivers of the many, many heavy transport juggernauts that nocturnally ply their trade up and down the road, for a straight and level road is a more profitable road for these lumbering multi-wheeled beasts, I'm sure.

No – it has to be said – the road is dull. For this reason, some of life's small pleasures take on a proportion far beyond their normal rating when waiting for the kilometres to tick over on the dashboard display. Take food for example. Knowing that one can stop and sample the simple yet honest fare of the Avenel Roadhouse for example, engenders an extreme sense of anticipation, which is only heightened by the arithmetic of the odometer. X kilometres, at Y kmh = Z minutes until Avenel Roadhouse hamburger.

I have criss-crossed the State attending various meetings, functions and events under the general banner of botanic gardens, at all hours of the day and night. In doing so, I have gained an appreciation for the finer points of roadside dining, including that elusive quarry,

the perfect meat pie. For some time I kept mental notes of the various qualities of assorted meat pies purchased from one end of the State to the other. Each had their own virtues, many had inherent and sometimes disastrous flaws. Each was assessed during consumption on the basis of its pastry construction (engineering integrity), flavour, consistency and texture, colour and character. So many pies scored well in one category, only to fail in another.



Photos: Richard Barley  
Swans enjoying someone's picnic.

The appearance and flavour would suggest that a contender was lining up for a podium finish, only to be let down by a basic structural weakness that would send the contents erupting forth like a flow of glowing hot magma over the consumer's hand and lap. Instant disqualification and extensive laundering would be the unfortunate result. Some had the Vogue model looks, only to be found concealing unidentifiable animal parts. Enough said.

Very occasionally, perhaps

through the skill and experience of the baker, or maybe just through a random coincidence of factors, the perfect pie would be produced. In order to assess whether it was due to the former or latter reasons, a return visit and sampling – and possibly several more so – would need to be carried out. This is the rigour of scientific method – the results must be repeatable. Suffice to say that the true champions are few. For many years, a bakery known as

Volk's Pies in Ouyen was the undisputed champion. Their pies were widely respected, and would draw punters from far afield to purchase them as they were presented straight from the ovens, fresh from the pie tray. Sadly Volk's is no more (though the new bakery that has arisen a few doors down claims to be the same place... I've tested its product. It's not in the same league).

The Gardens has provided its own share of events of gastronomical proportions over the years. Frequently I find

myself reliving the experiences shared at the old tea rooms (same building, slightly different shape) when it used to be operated by the public sector. As Gardens employees, we would wander down there for lunch to be confronted with mammoth servings of heavily pastry-ed pies, such as the steak and kidney variety. These were pie portions to be reckoned with, served up by ladies from a variety of national backgrounds and sometimes quite limited grasp of the English language (particularly the words that conveyed 'that's enough'). One would stagger off with a laden tray and set to the manful (please read as personful) task of dismantling the load, piece by piece. Having achieved the objective, the real challenge was then to return to the servery, and to take possession of a serve of apple strudel, crumble or whatever other delight was on offer. Naturally, ownership of the dessert course could not be realized without a hefty accompaniment of ice cream and lashings of cream, topped off with half a bucketful of custard, for good measure. I've seen many a good and noble trencherman buckle under the weight of expectation when they have come eye to eye with this school boarding house-style fare. Some might label it 'comfort food', but I have to tell you there is nothing comfortable about trying to manoeuvre a considerable payload of pie and pudding back up the hill from the lakeside tea room to the Herbarium, for example.

What a refreshing change it has been to view the



burgeoning popularity of kitchen gardens, and to witness the ever-growing number of schools that are establishing their own plots to grow food plants. Here at the RBG, we have contributed to this groundswell in partnership with a group called Cultivating Community, by developing and presenting a course 'Growing School Community Gardens'. This nine-week program aimed to provide participants with the tools and knowledge to enhance school grounds through the establishment of their own gardens. Topic areas included practical skills, use of play in the garden, edible gardens, creating habitat, and recycling and reuse programs. Courses such as this (and their application back at the school base) can make a significant difference in terms of choices about healthy eating and lifestyles, in addition to being a positive learning experience.

One gets the sense that more and more home gardeners also are seeing the value in setting aside part of the garden for the purpose of growing food. Availability of water has continued to be a challenge over the past few summers, but on a domestic scale the opportunities offered by rainwater collection and other water re-use systems, together with prudent selection, combination and timing of crops can make these plots very successful. As with all forms of gardening, we continue to learn year by year, and to benefit from the learnings of others.

Learning experiences come in a variety of forms, sometimes on a very experiential basis.

Take the picnic experience for example. Picnicking on our lawns has been a fine tradition for generations of visitors and their families. This sets us apart from various well known botanic gardens overseas that specifically forbid such wanton behaviour. It may say a little about national culture – I can't imagine the Australian population tolerating such a rule! The picnicker within the Gardens has at times had to contend with (and learn from) other challenges however. I'm



sure we've all seen many an elaborate family picnic in the grip of the terror that only a rampant black swan can engender, when it is intent on sampling the fine fare. At times I've seen them working as a team, one confronting the group head on, the other working from the back to take the easy pickings from the unwary targets. When one sees the swan at its full height with wings and neck extended, it is not surprising that it often gets things its way. The swan is a very intimidating bird, albeit full of bluff.

The boldest undertaking I've seen from a solo swan involved it holding a whole wedding party to ransom at the tea rooms. I was summoned on the radio to attend to the situation, and on arrival found a party of thirty or so including the bride and groom in full regalia at a sit-down lunch, with the swan circling like a shark. No-one was game to move from the table, for fear of attack. I must confess that I didn't have a plan for addressing the situation, but found that the Harris Tweed

men's jacket when removed can be used like the toreador's cape, and after some golden slapstick moments, the swan was kind enough to allow itself to be herded out the door. The relief among the party was palpable and overwhelming. They burst into spontaneous applause, laughter and tears, all in close succession. No doubt the emotion of the day had a bit to do with that. I was more than happy to escape with dignity, reputation and jacket more-or-less intact.

*Richard Barley, Divisional Director, Melbourne Gardens*



**GARDEN  
PLANT  
CONSERVATION  
ASSOCIATION  
OF AUSTRALIA**

**ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**  
Thursday 10th September 2009  
6.30 For 7pm  
Wine & Cheese

**DOMAIN HOUSE**  
Dallas Brooks Drive  
SOUTH YARRA  
Victoria 3141

**Guest Speaker: John Rayner**  
*Plants & Design Strategies*  
*For Our New Climate*  
**Book Launch:**  
*Old Nursery Catalogue,*  
*Second Edition.*

**PLUS**  
**Bring & Buy Plant Sales**  
**From Collection Holders**

**Supper provided**

**Telephone: (03) 9650 5639**

Garden Plant Conservation Association of Australia Inc. (GPC) has published a new edition of *Plants Listed in Nursery Catalogues in Victoria 1855-1889*.

First published in 1992 and compiled by Margaret Brookes and Richard Barley, this new edition has been revised with up to date botanical nomenclature.

Cost: \$30.00 from GPC.

Telephone: 61 3 9650 5639

Fax: 61 3 9650 5639

Email: [gpcaa@netspace.net.au](mailto:gpcaa@netspace.net.au)



# ILLUSTRATORS

## Classes

Term 4 will start in the week beginning 12 October. Classes will be held on Tuesday and Wednesday evenings and in the daytime on Mondays, Wednesdays, Saturdays (two sessions each day - 2.5hr), Thursdays (one 2.5 hr session) and Fridays (one 3 hr session.)

2.5hr classes: \$255 (incl GST)

Friends: \$215 (incl GST)

3 hr classes: \$295 (incl GST)

Friends: \$255 (incl GST)

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

## Botanical Illustration Quarterly Meeting

### WHAT'S NEW IN ART SUPPLIES.

Tuesday 8 September, 10.00 for 10.30am in the Whirling Room  
COST: \$5.50. Pay on the day.

RSVP Friends' office 9650 6398

Mr Mike Stella from Dean's Art Supplies will introduce 'What's good and what's new in paper, paint and brushes'. Come and try.

## The Whirlybirds

Since we have had consistent attendance over the Winter months in the Whirling Room, people on the waiting list have not been contacted. The Botanical Illustrators have been working on their individual subjects, some of which sold at the Travelling Exhibition held at the Fremantle Art Centre in WA. If you are interested in joining us at a later date, please call Sandra Sanger on 9598 9532 to be added to the waiting list.



## Still Life Workshop

### PAINT FLOWERS AND FRUIT IN OILS WITH ANITA MERTZLIN

Whirling Room Studio,  
Observatory Gate  
23, 24 & 25 September 2009  
10.00am to 3.30pm

COST: \$250 Friends \$205

For bookings please contact the Friends' office, 9650 6398.

Learn the painting technique used to draw flowers, fruit and vegetables in a still life context. This approach enables the artist to record visual observation quickly and is useful for communicating surface texture.

Anita has had nine solo shows, and exhibits regularly at Gallery 101 in Collins Street.

Materials including brushes, canvas and paints will be provided.



## Mathematical Life of Plants

In June, Laurie Andrews, BSc, DipEd, and botanical illustrator (pictured right) gave the Illustrators a most interesting talk on the numbers, shapes and radiating, spiral and fractal patterns seen in plants. She was inspired by reading the book *By Natural Design* by Pat Murphy.

Patterns are mostly a repetition of shape:

- hexagonal or honeycomb: eg turtle backs;
- branching;
- spiral, including Archimedes spiral as in a spider's web; and equiangular spiral as in nautilus shells; helix and corkscrew;
- radiating patterns or starburst, found in many rain forest plants, or in veins of leaves;
- fractal patterns or geometry of similar shapes, which can be reproduced on a computer eg folded fern frond.

On a *leucodendron* stem we noted the rotation of the leaves, and we looked at sample pine cones end-on to see spirals moving both clockwise and anti-clockwise; on the head of sunflowers, 55 spirals one way and 89 the other!

Laurie also discussed Fibonacci numbers, the Golden Ratio, a shape thought pleasing to the eye, and the Golden section. She stressed that the measurements between each section of these shapes must be rendered accurately in our paintings and that artists should keep the above scientific facts in mind when observing and painting our plants, flowers and seed pods.

Judy Jarman



Photo: Esma Lawley

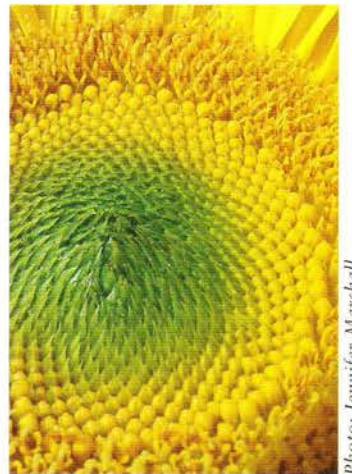


Photo: Jennifer Marshall



Photo: Michael Hare



# FOR THE MEMBERS



## Christmas Gifts

When planning your Christmas gift list this year, don't forget our beautiful Botanical Illustration calendar (flyer and order form enclosed with this issue) which is unique on two counts:

- the artwork has been supplied free of charge by our wonderful artist Friends and
- these artists are world-renowned and, with one exception, are Australian.

The calendar has been designed so that the prints can be framed for perpetual enjoyment and is available for \$15.00 plus postage and packing from the Friends' office on 9650 6398.

Pictured above is our latest venture with our artist Friends. It is a set of five blank cards, featuring designs from *The Art of Botanical Illustration Exhibition 2008*, chosen to suit every occasion. The cards will be sold in a pack at \$11.00 and can be obtained from the Friends' office or at selected Friends' functions.

Also with this edition of *Botanic News* Members will receive a flyer/order form for this year's Christmas card, again featuring artwork by one of the 2008 *Celia Rosser Medal* winners, Jennifer Wilkinson.

The card will be sold in packs of five, either blank, or containing the message 'Season's Greetings'. This year the shape of the card has been altered to reflect Australia Post requirements.

It is worth noting that the printing companies with whom we work aim to leave only the lightest possible footprint on our environment, and *Botanic News* and our cards are printed on recycled paper.

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

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

RBG Cranbourne - Australian Garden: Entry fee \$7.35. Non-members \$9.80.

Terrace Tea Rooms & Reception Centre, RBG, offers Members 10 per cent discount on all purchases. [www.terracereception.com.au](http://www.terracereception.com.au)

National Gallery of Victoria offers 10 per cent discount at the NGV shop and \$10 off NGV annual membership (new membership only). For membership enquiries contact 8620 2233 or email: [members@ngv.vic.gov.au](mailto:members@ngv.vic.gov.au)

### Blackwood Lane Gallery & Gardens

24 Blackwood Lane, Gembrook

Ph: 5968 1567

10% off paintings, prints and commissions.

### Botanical Creations

122 Grange Rd, Glen Huntly

Ph: 9571 9922

10% off all plants

### Bulleen Art and Garden

6 Manningham Rd West, Bulleen

[www.baag.com.au](http://www.baag.com.au)

10% off plants, 5% off other goods (excludes paving/retaining walls, tanks and turf)

### Cloudehill Nursery - Gardens - Restaurant

89 Olinda-Monbulk Rd, Olinda

[www.cloudehill.com.au](http://www.cloudehill.com.au)

10% off plants only

### Collectors Corner (at Garden World)

810 Springvale Rd, Braeside

[www.gardenworld.com.au](http://www.gardenworld.com.au)

10% off all plants, Collectors Corner only

### Cultivate Nursery, Florist & Gifts

Rear 91-93 Doncaster Rd, North Balwyn

[www.cultivatenuresery.com.au](http://www.cultivatenuresery.com.au)

10% off everything

### Feldspar at Trentham B&B

via Daylesford

[www.feldspargetaway.com.au](http://www.feldspargetaway.com.au)

10% discount off accommodation

### Garden of Eden Nursery, Cafe & Antiques

33 Ferrars Rd, Albert Park

[www.gardenofedenursery.com.au](http://www.gardenofedenursery.com.au)

10% off everything (cash)

5% off everything (credit cards)

### Garden Patch Nursery & Florist

1418 Toorak Rd, Burwood

Ph: 9889 6230 10% discount

### Glasshaus Nursery/Design/Florist

52 Stanley St, Richmond

Ph: 9421 4100

10% off plants and cut flowers

### Lister Teak Garden Furniture

22 Industry Court, Lilydale

Ph: 9735 4010

Free 100-page colour catalogue of Cotswold Furniture Collection. Free delivery.

### Peonies & Picnics - quality tools, specialised gardening books

8 Howe St, Daylesford

Ph: 5348 1882

10% discount off quality tools, specialised gardening books.

### Sculptured Steel Custom Metalwork

[www.sculpturedsteel.com.au](http://www.sculpturedsteel.com.au)

10% off custom-made pieces

### Town and Country Gardens

1280 Malvern Rd, Malvern

Ph: 9822 9704

10% off plants over \$20 only

### Town and Country Gardens

24 Whitehorse Rd, Balwyn

Ph: 9816 9300

10% off plants over \$20 only

(List current at July 2009)



# NEW MEMBER APPLICATION

PLEASE PRINT

Name(s) .....

(Mr / Mrs / Miss / Ms / Dr)

Address .....

Postcode .....

Telephone: ( ) .....

Email: .....

I wish to apply for membership in the following category

☐ **Household - 1 year** **\$66**

(Two adults living at same address. Please state name of second person)

☐ 2 years \$120

☐ 3 years \$180

☐ **Individual (within 50km of the GPO) - 1 year** **\$45**

☐ 2 years \$80

☐ 3 years \$120

☐ **Interstate, Overseas, Country, Pensioner\*, Student\* (full-time)** **\$33**

(\*state pension number / student number and educational institution)

☐ **Life/Group Memberships/Bequests/Wills**

Please send me details

**Trust Fund DONATIONS**

(Tax deductible over \$2.00, receipt issued)

\$

**TOTAL ENCLOSED**

\$

Cheque/Money order enclosed OR please charge my

☐ Visa

☐ Mastercard

Signature .....

Expiry Date .....

Please make cheques payable to Friends of RBG and post to:

Friends of RBG, Gate Lodge, 100 Birdwood Ave, Melbourne 3004

Age Group

☐ Under 25

☐ 25-39

☐ 40-59

☐ 60 and over

How did you hear of the Friends of RBG? .....

Subscription rates as at 1/6/09. Rates subject to annual review. ABN 43 438 335 331



**FRIENDS** of the  
ROYAL BOTANIC GARDENS  
MELBOURNE INC.

# BOTANIC NEWS

BOTANIC NEWS is produced quarterly for Friends of the Royal Botanic Gardens, Melbourne Inc. which was formed to stimulate further interest in the Gardens and the National Herbarium and to support and assist them whenever possible.

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