



BOTANIC NEWS

SUMMER 1986

FROM THE PRESIDENT

1986 has been another most successful and active year for the Friends, with a wide range of events and activities organised by your enthusiastic Committee and volunteers, culminating in a very successful Exhibition of Botanical Art. Organised by Beth Higgs, the Exhibition was opened by the Hon. Joan E. Kirner, Minister for Conservation, Forests and Lands on October 10. Works by Jenny Phillips, Colin Woolcock and Celia Rosser were exhibited and the event was well received by the public. Another major event will be the opening of the new Herb Garden during November for which the Friends provided \$2 500 for plants and labels. The publication of the first issue of *Botanic magazine*, a journal of botanical and horticultural interest with particular reference to our Botanic Gardens, is a significant achievement for the year. The magazine is of a very high quality and the editor, Dianna McClellan is to be congratulated for her efforts together with her editorial committee colleagues, Joan Nesbit and Eve Almond.

As previously announced, our Governor, His Excellency Dr David McCaughey has kindly agreed to be the Friends' Patron, providing valuable support towards the Friends' objectives. 1987 will see our Trust Fund, now established, moving into top gear, plus a major expansion of the Friends' shop at the kiosk within the Gardens gaining momentum.

1986 has been a year of excitement and one that has moved particularly quickly. It seems quite incredible that it is already, with this issue of *Botanic news* being the last for 1986, time to extend to all Friends a very happy Christmas with very best wishes for 1987 from all members of your Committee. We hope that as many members as possible will attend our Christmas party to be held at 7.30 p.m. on Friday December 12 1986 in the Kiosk at the Royal Botanic Gardens. This will not only provide us with an opportunity to wish each other a happy Christmas but also to inspect our shop and learn of activities proposed for 1987. Looking forward to greeting you at our Christmas party.

Frank Phillips



Christmas Cactus

MEMBERS' ACTIVITIES 1986-87

CHRISTMAS PARTY

Friday December 12 at 7.30 p.m. when we can socialise and enjoy our final function for 1986, the Friends' Christmas Dinner, to be held at the Kiosk in the Gardens.

Entrance is by Gate 'A' only — at the corner of Anderson Street and Alexander Parade. (Numbers limited to 100.)

A 3-course meal, pre-dinner goodies, Christmas cake, champagne and red and white wine are on the menu! Do join us.

Admission:

Members & Guides \$25.00

Non-Members \$28.00

You already have your booking slip enclosed with the *Botanic magazine*. If by any chance you have not, apply to the Ticket Secretary in the usual way by Friday December 5, enclosing stamped, self-addressed envelope.

TRAVELS WITH A DIFFERENCE IN CENTRAL AUSTRALIA

An illustrated talk by Miss Helen Aston, Project Scientist (Taxonomy) at the National Herbarium and a botanist who is dealing with the native plants of Australia, particularly aquatic plants.

Tuesday February 10 1987 at 5.30 p.m. at the National Herbarium, Birdwood Avenue, South Yarra.

Helen's talk will be an illustrated account of three weeks in 1985 in central Australia around such places as Gosses Bluff, Kings Canyon and Bagot Gorge. Camping with companions and cook, with time to view and explore the magnificent scenery, to walk and climb, to see the plants and birds, the history and rock carvings. 'No rush, much of interest, and much exhilaration'.

Wine & Cheese 5.30 p.m. Lecture 6.10 p.m.

RSVP February 6

Golda Isaac 817 5640

Joan Nesbit 211 8979

Tickets at door:

Members & Guides \$4.00

Non-Members \$5.00

N.B. A brief extraordinary meeting of the Friends of the Royal Botanic Gardens, Melbourne will be held at 6.00 p.m. after drinks and before Helen's talk.

HERB LUNCHEON

Wednesday March 4 1987, 11.30 a.m. to 2.30 p.m. at Garden House, the home of the Director, Dr and Mrs David Churchill, Birdwood Avenue, South Yarra.

Mrs Ann Sandie, well-known herb specialist, speaker and caterer will provide the Herb Luncheon, and follow this with an informative talk about the uses of herbs. An opportunity also to purchase herbs, plants, fragrant sachets and herb vinegars.

Admission:

Members & Guides \$10.00

Non-Members \$12.00

RSVP Friday February 27 to Ticket Secretary, Friends of the Royal Botanic Gardens, National Herbarium, Birdwood Avenue, South Yarra, 3141 with cheque/money order made payable to 'Friends of the Royal Botanic Gardens, Melbourne' and enclosing stamped, self-addressed envelope. (Numbers limited to 70.)

RAIN FORESTS IN OTWAY RANGES

Guest speaker on Wednesday April 8 at 10.30 a.m. in the Herbarium Auditorium, Birdwood Avenue, South Yarra will be Mrs Kay Fairley, an enthusiastic and knowledgeable botanist and Voluntary Guide with the Gardens. This is a joint function with the Voluntary Guides.

Morning Tea will be served.

RSVP Monday April 6

Peg Gray 509 1052

Agnes Fulton 836 9183

Tickets at door:

Members & Guides \$3.00

Non-Members \$4.00

COMING ATTRACTIONS

TOUR OF RAIN FORESTS AND GARDENS

Towards the end of April 1987 we are to visit South West Victoria, including the Otway Ranges and old and new gardens. Details in our Autumn Newsletter.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF FRIENDS OF THE ROYAL BOTANIC GARDENS, MELBOURNE

Monday May 4 at 7.00 p.m. in the Herbarium Auditorium, Birdwood Avenue, South Yarra. Details later.

THE NEW HERB GARDEN

The new Herb Garden in the Melbourne Botanic Gardens is now open to visitors. Situated on the eastern side of the Oak Lawn, the Garden is laid out in the form of a cartwheel, somewhat reminiscent of an Elizabethan 'knot' garden. The beds between the wheel's paved spokes display a fascinating range of culinary herbs, arranged according to botanical families. The surrounding beds contain collections of Australian herbs, fragrant and medicinal herbs. A member of the Herb Society of Victoria will be on hand on Saturday and Sunday afternoons to show visitors around.

'TOUCH WOOD' EXHIBITION

Down near the Kiosk, hidden deep in a shrubbery, you will find 'Touch Wood', an enchanting exhibition exploring the folklore, facts and fantasies surrounding plants over the centuries. Charm and appeal for all ages.

Open Weekdays ... 10.00 a.m. - 4.00 p.m.

Weekends & Public Holidays except

Christmas Day .. 11.00 a.m. - 5.00 p.m.

Admission free.

The Voluntary Guides of the Botanic Gardens are hosting free walks 'In Touch With Plants' which either start or finish at the 'Touch Wood' Exhibition and visit the Herb Garden on the way. A friendly way to become better acquainted with the Gardens.

Times are as follows:

Tuesdays and Thursdays 10.00 a.m. & 11.00 a.m.
from the Plant Craft Cottage.

Wednesdays and Fridays 10.00 a.m. & 11.00 a.m.
from 'F' Gate, Birdwood Avenue.

Sundays 10.00 a.m. & 11.00 a.m.
from 'F' Gate, Birdwood Avenue.

There are no walks on public holidays.



SPECIAL BENEFITS TO FRIENDS

Fryer's Nursery, 589 Glenferrie Road, Hawthorn, Idaho Nurseries, 410 Waverley Road, East Malvern, and now The Arts Bookshop, 1067 High Street, Armadale very kindly offer special discounts to Friends on production of their current membership card.



FRIENDS' SHOP AT THE KIOSK

Mrs Iona Christianson has been appointed part-time manager of our 'new' Friends' shop at the Kiosk in the Gardens. Members are encouraged to visit, browse and shop, taking advantage of the 10% discount available on purchases exceeding \$20 on production of their current membership card.

We now have a wider selection of cards; also appropriate and attractive gifts very suitable for Christmas presents, souvenirs, etc. Iona particularly recommends Helen Velacott's new book *Some recollections of a happy life* which is about Marianne North in Australia and New Zealand; she also says be sure and see (and buy!) our beautiful linen tea-towels which feature herbs and commemorate the opening of the Herb Garden. Also in stock of course are our Posters, Guide Books, Post-Cards, Greeting Cards, Maud Gibson Flower Prints, Guide Brochures, Children's Packages and Activity Sheets. The shop will be open between the hours of 10.30 a.m. and 4.30 p.m. on each Thursday, Friday, Saturday and Sunday, and public holidays.

Enthusiastic volunteers willing to assist in the shop will be most welcome. If you can help please ring Brenda Owen 560 4414.

GIFT TO THE FRIENDS

Our President tells us that as the result of the gift of an anonymous donor the Friends have acquired two of the drawings shown in the recent Exhibition of Botanical Art, *Capparis* sp., Caper, by Jenny Phillips and *Pterostylis coccinea*, Red-hoods, by Collin Woolcock. In accordance with the donor's wishes these drawings have been presented to the Herbarium as a permanent reminder of the Exhibition.

INCORPORATION OF THE FRIENDS

The Committee has decided that appropriate steps should be taken to incorporate the Friends under the *Association Incorporation Act 1981* (Victoria). For that purpose, a special general meeting of the Friends will be held on Tuesday February 10 1987 at 6.00 p.m. immediately before the talk by Helen Aston. A formal notice of the meeting will be issued soon after Christmas.

CAN YOU HELP?

The Editor for the *Botanic magazine* wants to hear from anyone who would like to join the Editorial Committee and help with the advertisements or recent books in this new journal. Please contact Dianna McClellan on 859 1454.

PAST ACTIVITIES

May we add our comments to those of our President re the Botanical Art Exhibition. From the official opening on Friday October 10 to closing time on Sunday October 19 the Exhibition proved stimulating and rewarding in every possible way — culturally, socially, financially too — a wonderful show-case for two very talented illustrators, Jenny Phillips and Colin Woolcock. We had marvellous help from a host of diverse people, both Friends and otherwise, all of whom helped to ensure the Exhibition's outstanding success.

In September Dr Sophie Ducker told us of the System Garden at Melbourne University and Miss Erica Mooney spoke about the Besler Botanicals, both events of great interest to those members able to attend.



THE SUMMER WALK

Summer is the time to visit the Gardens to fully appreciate its shady havens and sprawling lawns. This walk begins at the Oak Lawn close to the Herbarium.

A walk across the Oak Lawn to the Princes Lawn and the beautiful blue-mauve flowers of the *Jacaranda mimosifolia* come into view. On the other side of the path is the majestic Golden Chalic Vine, *Solandra maxima* and on the edge of the Princes Lawn, towards the Fern Gully, are fuchsias displaying beautiful colours of pink, mauve and red.

Continuing on into the Fern Gully, the hot sun is soon forgotten with the native and exotic ferns and palms providing a refreshing rain forest setting.

The Ornamental Lake is cooling and restful to visit. Surrounding the Lake on the Alexandra Avenue and 'H' Gate side is a beautiful display of hydrangeas. The summer breeze carries with it the lovely scent of the Ginger Lily which along with *Acanthus mollis*, Bear's Breeches and *Agapanthus praecox* ssp. *orientalis*, surround the Lake.

The Canna Beds, situated at the Nareeb Gates and on the Southern Lawn, offer a colourful display and a pleasant backdrop for photographs.

A walk along the Australian Border is quite colourful. *Hibbertia scandens* with its bright yellow flowers adds colour to the ground. The creamy flowers of *Backhousia anisata* can soon be seen through the trees and a little further on the beautiful scarlet flowers of *Eucalyptus ficifolia*. One of the few Australian species of *Hibiscus* is situated at the 'F' Gate end of the Australian Border. The large white flowers with their red throats are worth viewing. A little further on is a specimen of *Castanospermum australe* with its striking yellow flowers which later turn orange-red. A fine specimen of *Brachychiton acerifolium* is also found here.

One tree which is a must for the summer walk is *Magnolia grandiflora*. Situated on the Southern Lawn opposite the Magnolia Bed, its perfumed, creamy white flowers are striking. Following the left fork in the path the newly designed and re-developed Rose Garden comes into view.

Linda Haddow, R.B.G. Apprentice

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