



BOTANIC NEWS
SUMMER 1987

FROM THE PRESIDENT

It is pleasing to confirm that the Friends of the Royal Botanic Gardens, Melbourne, now an incorporated body, continues to stimulate interest in our Botanic Gardens and National Herbarium and to support and assist them whenever possible. Consolidating its organisation with a climbing membership now in excess of 500, a sound financial basis achieved through membership subscriptions, surplus generated by a broad band of activities and projects, plus our most successful initiative of creating a shop at the Kiosk within the Gardens, insures that the Friends can continue to meet its objectives over the coming decades. Of particular significance is the fact that the Trustees of the Friends Trust Fund have just launched their brochure inviting support for major projects within the Gardens. These projects include:

- Automatic watering system \$500,000.
- Redevelop Long Island \$80,000
- Central Lake and Fern Gully improvements \$50,000
- Rare and endangered species collection \$40,000.
- A new flora of Victoria to be published by the National Herbarium of Victoria in four volumes, \$25,000

A copy of this brochure was distributed with the recently published *Botanic magazine*. The Friends of course continue to make funds available direct to the management of the Gardens for a range of other projects from our operating funds. These projects have been reported in recent issues of our newsletter. I trust that all members will support and seek broad based support for our Trust Fund and activities of the Friends in general.

1987 has continued to see the Friends undertake a great many meetings, activities and projects. It is worth noting that the Royal Botanic Gardens is currently hosting the exhibition of the 'Gum-Nut Babies and Banksia Men'. The exhibition of the delights of May Gibbs and Peg Maltby is being assisted by the Maud Gibson Trust and the Friends, our special responsibility being the exhibition's shop. A sub-committee of Golda Isaac, Lesley Clark and Philip Ayton have been hard at work preparing for this exciting venture. Congratulations to the team together with Jenny Phillips, Dale McDonnell and many other volunteers who are making it possible for the exhibition to continue, with the shop being well patronized to the advantage of our overall funding levels.

Whilst concentrating on its prime objectives of providing support and assistance to our Gardens and National Herbarium together with the Cranbourne Annex, your Council nevertheless feels it is appropriate that the Friends show an interest on a broader field. For example, Vice President David Wilkinson recently spoke to a group endeavouring to assist the St Kilda Botanic Gardens. Likewise, we are pleased to report that viability studies are continuing to examine the possibility of Melbourne hosting an International Garden Festival in the



early 1990s. This project was initiated with a suggestion, by a member of the Friends Mrs Prue Myer, to the Victorian Tourism Commission some two years back. On the international scene members would have been shocked to learn of the storm that recently devastated southern England, causing extensive damage at the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew.

Discussions with the Gardens Director Professor E.A. Bell confirm that some 1,000 trees have in fact been lost. We have been advised that whilst Kew is not actively seeking financial help, contributions towards restoration work can be made to the 'Kew Gardens Hurricane Fund', c/o The Director, Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, Richmond, Surrey. TW93AB.

The Friends on your behalf have already extended our concern to the Director and his staff and have requested ideas as to how we might be of assistance. We have also alerted the 'Friends' organisations in Sydney and Adelaide. It is possible in conjunction with the management of the Royal Botanic Gardens, Melbourne, that we will receive a request from Kew for assistance in obtaining Australian stock to replace lost trees. It is our intention to keep members fully informed on this matter as we continue to determine what might be an appropriate Australian response to this tragedy to Gardens which our Melbourne Botanic Gardens have such strong links.

As with any organisation our strength lies within our membership. Accordingly it is essential that existing members continue the fine support they have shown over past years with new members being especially welcome, in order that our fine Gardens can receive the support and assistance they so truly deserve. May I take this opportunity on behalf of the Council to extend Christmas greetings and very best wishes for 1988.

Frank Phillips.
President

MEMBERS' ACTIVITIES 1988

THE WORLD IS MY GARDEN

Thursday January 21 at 8.00 p.m. at the Ross Hall Building, Melbourne Girls' Grammar School (Merton Hall) 86 Anderson Street, South Yarra. (Ross Hall entrance).

Mr Roy Lancaster, author, freelance writer and regular contributor to the English Royal Horticultural Society's Journal *'The garden'* is making a visit to Australia in January 1988 and will be in Melbourne for two days only. We are honoured indeed that he has agreed to spend an evening with us lecturing on some of his botanical wanderings in China and elsewhere. He will show slides of plants and places in different countries and will speak of the origins of plants, including plants in British gardens. His journeys in China have included following in E.H. 'Chinese' Wilson's footsteps visiting Mt Omei and other areas in western China where hundreds of species which we grow in our gardens grow naturally. These plants include Rhododendrons, Viburnums, Buddleias, Philadelphus, Hollies, Malus, Sorbus, Tilia, Stachyurus, Meliosma, Enkianthus and many more with which we are familiar. He talks of walking through a forest of trees 60-70 feet high of the Chinese Dove Tree or passing through a valley where Chusan Palms luxuriate along with the Chinese Fir. He has botanised in Kashmir and has much to inform on the diverse range of conifers and other plants which grow in that region.

Supper will be served.

RSVP	Monday January 18
Joan Nesbit	211 8979
Beryl Williams	877 3879
Members & Guides	\$3.00
Non-Members	\$4.00

WIND IN THE WILLOWS

Friday February 5, Oak Lawn, Royal Botanic Gardens
A special Friends' performance of 'Wind in the Willows', preceded by a BYO Picnic Tea at 6.00 p.m. will commence at 7.00 p.m. and finish by 8.30 p.m. at the latest. Children (and others) are invited to dress as characters in the 'Wind in the Willow' performance, prizes will be awarded. A wonderful opportunity for Friends and their families to meet together over the Picnic Tea and to be part of this entrancing Wind in the Willows performance.

Admission by Ticket \$4.00
RSVP by Friday January 22, to the Ticket Secretary, Friends of the Royal Botanic Gardens, National Herbarium, Birdwood Avenue, South Yarra, with cheque/money order made payable to 'Friends of the R.B.G. Inc.' A stamped self-addressed envelope would be appreciated.

VICTORIA'S VEGETATION

Thursday February 18 at 5.30 p.m. in The Astronomer's Residence (adjacent to Latrobe Cottage) Birdwood Avenue, South Yarra.

Dr David Christophel, a senior botanist at Adelaide University was the first Australian fossil botanist to be appointed to an Australian University. He will speak of the pre-history of Victoria's vegetation.

Wine & Cheese 5.30 p.m.	Lecture 6.00 p.m.
RSVP	February 16
Eve Brunner	818 5954
Beth Higgs	850 5908
Members & Guides	\$3.00
Non-Members	\$4.00

MORNING COFFEE AND GUIDED WALK

Thursday March 17 at 10.15 a.m. at the Kiosk, Royal Botanic Gardens.

An informal social gathering with coffee at the Kiosk, after which the Voluntary Guides will take groups on guided walks.

RSVP	Friday March 11
Lesley Clark	277 3984
Beth Higgs	850 5908
Members & Guides	\$2.00
Non-Members	\$3.00



BOTANICAL BOOKS AND PRINTS

State Library: We are privileged to be given the opportunity on Wednesday, June 15 to see and browse over some of the rare botanical books and prints housed in the State Library of Victoria. There will be three sessions: 10.30 a.m., 2.00 p.m. and 4.00 p.m. Further details in the Autumn Newsletter.

GUILFOYLE GARDEN TRIP FOR FRIENDS AND GARDENS STAFF

A unique opportunity for the Friends to share a day with the Gardens staff has been arranged for Tuesday March 22, 1988 and should prove to be a very enjoyable occasion. Three Guilfoyle gardens have been selected — the Colac Botanic Gardens; Mooleric at Birregurra, the garden of Mr and Mrs Robert Ramsay; and Turkeith also at Birregurra, the garden of Mr and Mrs Lockie Gordon.

First stop will be the Colac Botanic Gardens for a quick morning tea and a tour led by John Hawker (Project Officer) then on to Mooleric to explore that garden and hear Peter Lumley speak to us over lunch on some aspects of Guilfoyle's work. Turkeith conveniently adjoins Mooleric and we will make our visit last for the day there with Janet Gordon to show us around and speak about the restoration work she and her husband have undertaken. The garden of Turkeith has been much neglected over a period of time and the Gordons have only recently taken it over.

The bus will depart promptly from the National Herbarium at 8.00 a.m. returning by 5.45 p.m. There will be two buses but as we are sharing them with the Gardens staff the number of Friends' bookings will be limited. Book early to avoid disappointment. Bring your own thermos, morning tea and lunch.

Members	\$15.00
Non-Members	\$18.00

RSVP by March 8 to the Ticket Secretary, Friends of the Royal Botanic Gardens, National Herbarium, Birdwood Avenue, South Yarra, with cheque/money order made payable to 'Friends of the R.B.G. Inc.' A stamped self-addressed envelope would be appreciated.

VISIT TO PIRIANDA GARDEN OLINDA

Sunday, April 24.

These beautiful and well known gardens will be dressed in all their autumn glory at this time of year.

(Melway Map 122 - A12)

It is proposed to make this a picnic. Take your own car, bring your own lunch, or barbeque gear and food if you prefer. Booking can be arranged by us in the Car Park area where we shall meet at 11.30 a.m.

Members & Guides	\$5.00
Non-Members	\$6.00
RSVP	April 18
Beth Higgs	850 5908
Golda Isaac	817 5640

RECENT ACTIVITIES

Bini Malcolm — *'Persian Rugs and Garden Carpets'* 11/8/87. Highly successful and informative. Our grateful thanks to Melbourne Grammar School for the use of the Colman Room.

Farm Cottage Gardens at Daffodil Time — 17/9/87. A rewarding and happy day in the Kyneton area; special thanks to Dale McDonnell and Jenny Phillips for wonderful organisation and to the owners of the charming, interesting and unusual gardens visited. Plant sales arranged by Dale an extra bonus.

Adelaide and Kangaroo Island in Springtime — Sept. 20-27. As expected, a happy, rewarding and informative tour. Our special thanks to Lesley Clark and Adelaide Friends.

Friends of the R.B.G., Sydney — 16/10/87. On arrival in Melbourne, Sydney Friends enjoyed a walk with the Voluntary Guides through Government House gardens.

Sydney/Melbourne Friends' Dinner — A wonderful get-together with our Sydney counterparts, high lighted by Ann Latreille's talk.

Luncheon at Garden House with Sydney Friends — 17/10/87. Prefaced by an excellent (and damp) guided walk with the Voluntary Guides and including a visit to the Friends' Shop and Morning Tea at the Plant Craft Cottage (opened specially for the occasion). The Luncheon, catered for by Melbourne Friends — headed by Pat Wales — was a special occasion hosted by Sylvia and David Churchill.

Beth Higgs — *'The Art and Meaning of Ikebana'* — 29/10/87. Beth and five gifted friends, a delectable basket lunch in the charming home and garden of John and Jenny Robertson, all combined to provide a wonderful occasion for the 70 guests; grateful thanks to all concerned.

Day Tour to 'Glenara', Bulla — 10/11/87. Ruth Rundle warmly and graciously welcomed us, joined us for lunch and accompanied us around the fascinating and beautiful garden. A great Day! Thank you Ruth.

Preview Cocktail Party, 'May Gibbs and Peg Maltby Exhibition' — 16/11/87. Robert Holden, Guest Speaker. A happy and informative occasion. The Shop staffed and manned by the Friends a delight.

On 17/11/87 The Activities Sub-committee of the Friends provided a Cocktail Party for teachers and Librarians who were invited to view the Exhibition. Robert Holden, Guest Speaker.

Rosemary Verey — Dr David Churchill took Mrs Verey on a guided walk of the Gardens, calling at the Plant Craft Cottage and Friends' Shop before returning to Afternoon Tea at Garden House with Mrs Churchill and a few friends.

Friends' Shop First Birthday Party — 7/11/87. Hosted by David Wilkinson and celebrated at a Morning Tea Party at the Kiosk. Guests included volunteers in the Shop, Friends' Council members, Herbarium staff members and other helpers. A very enjoyable occasion on a lovely sunny morning.

Raincoat: After the Sydney Friends' Dinner Betty Duncan (836 8216) was left with a rain coat Not belonging to her. If you were a guest please check your wardrobe!!!



THE GUMNUT SHOP

I think May Gibbs would have liked the Gumnut Shop that has sprung up in the midst of the 'Snugglepot and Cuddlepie' exhibition in the Gardens. The shop design was the brainwave of Jenny Phillips who, with Dale McDonnell have set up shop for the duration of the display. *"I wanted to do something which would be in keeping with the theme of the exhibition,"* said Jenny. Together with a team of Friends' volunteers they glued and stitched the shop into its gumnut shape. *"It took hours and was a labour of love,"* she added.

The framework is a garden arbour modified so that it could be easily transported and reassembled inside the Herbarium. The heavy duty green fabric covering was stiffened with a coating of aquahere before the May Gibbs style gum leaves were arranged across the outside. The final touches, the scribbly writing on a piece of bark near the door and bushland animals peeping inside at all the goodies for sale like the gum drops, nectar drops and blossom drops, really took my fancy.

Jennifer Stackhouse

MEMBERSHIP DETAILS

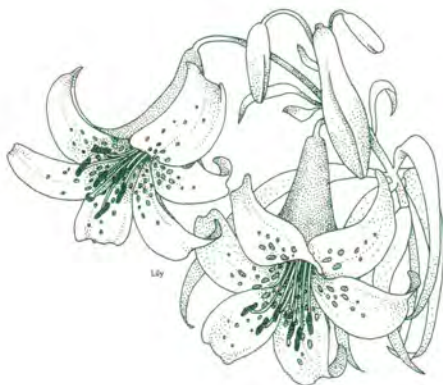
Annual Subscription to the Friends —

Family Membership	\$25.00
Individual	\$18.00
Concession (Student, Pensioner & Country)	\$12.00

To apply for membership send cheque/money order made out to:

'Friends of the Royal Botanic Gardens, Melbourne Inc.',
addressed to:

Membership Secretary, Friends of the Royal Botanic
Gardens, Birdwood Avenue, South Yarra 3141.
(Tel. 650 9424)



SPECIAL BENEFITS TO FRIENDS

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

SUMMER NEWS FROM THE GARDENS

The Botanic Gardens is a wonderful place for family visits this summer, with the very popular exhibition 'Snugglepot and Cuddlepie and other Fairy Folk of the Australian Bush' in the Herbarium until December 20 and performances of 'Wind in the Willows' out in the Gardens in January and February.

The 'Gardener's Half Hours' on Wednesdays are also proving popular and will continue in January after a break over Christmas. They are an excellent way to get to know plants in the Perennial Border and the Herb Garden. (The Gardens Seasonal Calendar has details).

The Perennial Border is looking lovely. Situated at the top end of the Princes Lawn, the Border faces north-east with the most northerly end of the bed being quite shaded. This allows a range of shade loving plants to thrive, including hostas, heucheras, pulmonarias, dicentras, astrilbes and columbines. There is a fine backdrop of shrubs and bamboos.

Emphasis has been placed on long flowering plants. The flower colours chosen are mostly subdued-pinks, pale blues, whites, lavenders. For example the cream and pink form of the Californian Poppy, *Eschscholtzia californica* and the white form of Campion, *Lychnis coronaria* are featured. Later, in January, there will be a shift in colour to the yellows and oranges.

Other interesting areas in the Garden over summer include the Grey Garden near the Temple-of-the-Winds (recently labelled with several silver name plates, thanks to the Friends). For those particularly interested in silver and grey plants, Roger Spencer, the Gardens Horticultural Botanist, has just written a book *Growing silver, grey and blue foliage plants* which is now available in the Friends' Shop. There is also a new little booklet available on the Herb Garden which is flourishing again after being rested in October.

Eve Almond
Interpretations Officer

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