BOTANIC NEWS

SUMMER 1990

FROM THE PRESIDENT

The Summer of 1990/91 heralds a spirit of renewal in the Gardens and Herbarium. It will be interesting for all Friends of the Royal Botanic Gardens, Melbourne Incorporated taking part in this feeling of change. The possibility of a Royal Botanic Gardens Board was suggested at the Annual General Meeting and this idea was supported personally by our guest, the Minister for Conservation and Environment, the Hon. Steve Crabb. There has been speculation in the press as to the future of the Gardens and Herbarium generally – Melbourne's best tourist asset – and specifically about the Department's Update No. 5 regional policy which has caused some concern in its interpretation.

The Kiosk has been advertised for lease and an enthusiastic response has resulted. In the re-planning, our Friends' Shop has been allocated more floor space which is essential if we are to keep reaching our projected budget figures. New exclusive Royal Botanic Gardens' stock of aprons and carry bags will be on the shelves in the New Year. The Manager and Shop Sub-Committee are to be congratulated on their perseverance in ensuing that these, our first exclusive Friends' articles, are of the highest quality both in design and material.

The Growing Friends have done it again! At the two-day sale in October they proved as usual that they were innovative, productive and efficient; they are to be congratulated.

Activities are as varied and interesting as ever.

Projects are impressive and all Friends should take great pride in our achievements. The 1990 Annual General Meeting with its excellent attendance, associated publicity and guest of honour, proved to be a great success. Our work is important, not only our financial support of the Gardens and Herbarium, but also our input into departmental policy.

Wishing you and your families a very enjoyable Christmas and may 1991 be a year of great happiness.

D. R. Wilkinson
President.

MEMBERS' ACTIVITIES

CHRISTMAS DINNER

Friday 14 December at 7.00 pm at the Kiosk in the Royal Botanic Gardens. Enter by "A" Gate, cnr Anderson Street and Alexandra Avenue. We look forward to meeting Friends during this ever popular social gathering.

Members: $24.00 Others: $25.00
RSVP: 10 December on enclosed booking form.

YUULONG LAVENDER FARM and LINTON PARK

Wednesday 16 January 1991

Join us on a day's bus trip to Mt Egerton to visit the noted Yuulong Lavender Farm with its 28 species of lavender and 6000 plants in the field and wander amongst the colourful rows, watch the harvesting with a sickle, inspect the herb and cottage garden. Lavender products are for sale. Morning tea will be available at Yuulong for $1.80. At 12 noon we proceed via Ballarat to Mr Gordon Clarke's beautiful Linton Park at Linton. Mr Clarke has seven acres of garden and 1000 acres as a bird park.

The bus will leave the National Herbarium in Birdwood Avenue at 9.00 am sharp and have a further pick-up in front of the National Gallery at 9.10 am. We expect to be back at the Herbarium at approximately 5.00 pm. BYO picnic lunch and drinks.

Members: $17.00 (including $2.50 entrance fee to Yuulong)
Others: $19.00
RSVP: 11 January on enclosed booking form.

"WIND IN THE WILLOWS" and "A MID-SUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM"

Once again a special Friends' night for each of these delightful shows in the Royal Botanic Gardens has been allocated by the producers – the Fantastic Entertainment in Public Places body.

"Wind in the Willows" Tuesday 22 January 1991 at 6.00 pm. Tickets must be collected at Gate "F", adjacent to the Herbarium in Birdwood Avenue, between 5.40 pm and 5.50 pm just prior to the performance.

Adults: $13.00 Children: 15 years and under: $7.00.
RSVP: 12 January on enclosed booking form.

"A Mid-Summer Night's Dream" 11 February 1991 at 8.45 pm. Tickets must be collected at Gate "F", adjacent to the Herbarium in Birdwood Avenue, between 8.25 pm and 8.35 pm just prior to the performance.

Adults: $24.00 Children 15 years and under: $14.00
RSVP: 1 February on enclosed booking form.

STAFF/ADELAIDE TRIP

Monday 4 February 1991 at 5.30 pm at the National Herbarium.

The Friends are holding a wine and cheese evening at which four of the Gardens staff who visited Adelaide will speak and show slides of their impressions of the tour.

Late November staff of the Royal Botanic Gardens, Melbourne visited the Adelaide Botanic Gardens and the new Conservatory, the Mt. Lofty Garden and Wittunga. Part of the cost of this trip was covered by a fund given by the Friends to the Gardens and Herbarium for educational purposes for staff members.

Members: $3.00 Others: $4.00
RSVP: 1 February on enclosed booking form.

BOUNTIFUL BORNEO

Friday 8 February 1991 at 8.00 pm at the National Herbarium.

Come and hear Dr Jim Willis give an illustrated talk on the Friends' most exciting recent visit to North Borneo. An absolute must! Supper provided.

Members: $3.00 Others: $4.00
RSVP: 6 February on enclosed booking form.

A RIVER CRUISE ON THE MARIBYRNONG

Tuesday 26 February 1991.

Yes! Come with us to see the rejuvenation of the river precinct with the plantings and lineal park concept espoused in the mid 1970s. The M.M.B.W. and municipalities along this river have turned it into a vastly more attractive landscape/recreation area.

We shall meet at Footscray Park at 10.20 am for 10.30 am departure on the "Blackbird". After a two hour cruise – with commentary – upstream to Canning Reserve and return, we enjoy our BYO picnic lunch at the Park followed by a guided tour of Footscray Botanic Gardens (an optional short walk to Newell's Paddock to see this 12 acre reclaimed wetland)

Meet at jetty near car park beside the Pioneer Hotel just west of the Smithfield Road/Ballarat Road bridge – turn north at edge of Footscray Park. Refer Melway Map 42 F3.

Members: $12.00 Others: $14.00 *Nos. limited to 25*
RSVP: 19 February on enclosed booking form.
If you require a lift from the Herbarium, please ring the office on 650 6398.

BOTANICAL ART WORKSHOPS FOR 1991

By popular demand we are continuing Botanical Art workshops in 1991. From February to December on the second Tuesday of each month from 10.00 am to 3.00 pm.

Anita Barley, Botanical Illustrator at the National Herbarium, will be giving her professional guidance for two hours at each workshop session. We have also been invited to view some of the magnificent books held in the Rare Book Collection of the Herbarium by the Librarian, Helen Cohn.

12 February	11 June	8 October
12 March	9 July	12 November
9 April	13 August	10 December
14 May	10 September	

Cost: $95.00 – members of "Friends" only.
Venue: "Weights & Measures" boardroom, Birdwood Avenue (behind Astronomer's Resident).
Coffee, tea and biscuits included, but please BYO mug and lunch and BYO materials.
For further information telephone Louise Coronel 827 5910.
RSVP: 5 February on enclosed booking form.

VICTORIA'S BIG DESERT AND LITTLE DESERT

Thursday 7 March 1991 at 8.00 pm at the National Herbarium.

Dr Terry O'Brien, until recently Reader in Botany at Monash University, will speak about Victoria's north west desert parks, a most exciting region. "Unique soils, relatively low rainfall, sporadic summer fires and rare but catastrophic frosts combine to produce a remarkable diversity of plants, insects, birds and mammals, all interacting in fascinating ways."

Dr O'Brien is leading the Friends' Autumn Mallee Parks Tour in April 1991. His talk will give us the opportunity to learn more about the Mallee, an area he knows well from his own research over the years. Supper will be served.

Members: $3.00 Others: $4.00
RSVP: 5 March on enclosed booking form.

"RARE AND THREATENED PLANTS"

Wednesday 20 March 1991 at 8.00 pm at the National Herbarium.

The Friends are indeed fortunate that Dr Peter Wyse Jackson, Senior Research Officer and Programme Director with the Botanic Gardens Conservation Secretariat, now based at the World Conservation Monitoring Centre, Cambridge U.K. will be our guest speaker.

Dr Wyse Jackson who is sponsored by the British Council will be in Melbourne for two days after attending the Plant Conservation Conference in Canberra where he will be one of the leading speakers.

Dr Wyse Jackson is well qualified to speak – his research interests being: botanic gardens, conservation, plant systematics and floristics. Much of his research has been on the native flora of Britain and Ireland and on the conservation of island floras, and in particular the islands of Mauritius and the Azores. Among other things, Dr Wyse Jackson is an avid plant collector and is co-ordinating an inventory of all the rare and theatened plants in the world's Botanic Gardens. Supper will be served.

Members: $3.00 Others: $4.00
RSVP: 18 March on enclosed booking form.

AUTUMN MALLEE PARKS TOUR – BIG DESERT AND LITTLE DESERT

Five Day Tour, Friday 12 April to Tuesday 16 April (inclusive) 1991.

This year the Friends are using the services of Dr Terry O'Brien (Australis Pty. Ltd.) to lead a tour of Victoria's north west desert parks. Victoria's mallee bushland is one of the last semi-arid areas in the world where large areas of natural vegetation remain and we will have the opportunity of learning about those factors that determine the delicate balance holding the area together.

Cost of the tour, transport, accommodation and all meals (including wine in the evening) is $565, payable in two instalments – $100 deposit by 4 February 1991 and the balance by 1 March 1991 (cheques only). The limit is 24, in order of receipt of payment, twin share only (regrettably).

Full details on the enclosed sheet. As a bonus we will visit "Mawallok" en route on day one for morning tea and a talk by Jocelyn Mitchell.

Please note: all bookings to Australis Pty. Ltd., Private Bag 2024, Box Hill 3128. Further details, departure points, accommodation addresses, etc. will be mailed on receipt of payment.

"TREASURES OF THE HERBARIUM" EXHIBITION

4 May-26 May 1991.

The National Herbarium is to stage an exhibition of its fabulous collection. Historic type specimens from early trips of exploration, rare books, art work and memorabilia are just some of the treasures to be put on display in May next year. Many will be shown publicly for the first time, an opportunity not be missed!

Full details will be available in the *Autumn botanic news.*

WEEKEND SEMINAR FOR FRIENDS OF VICTORIAN COUNTRY BOTANIC GARDENS

19 and 20 May 1991.

The Friends are planning this weekend in May so that country representatives will be in Melbourne during the "Treasures of the Herbarium" Exhibition. We are hoping that at least one or two Friends of each country Botanic Garden can be present. Further details in the *Autumn botanic news* and by mail to country Friends.

GUILFOYLE AND THE SUB-TROPICAL GARDEN

The Friends are delighted that, conjointly with the Australian Garden History Society, an evening function at which Mr Paul Fox will be guest speaker has been arranged for Wednesday 29 May at 8.00 pm at the National Herbarium, Birdwood Avenue, South Yarra. Further details in the *Autumn botanic news.*

CENTRAL GOLD FIELDS OF VICTORIA

A five day tour of the Central Gold Fields area is planned for spring of 1991, accompanied by Dr Jim Willis.

This tour will take us to Bendigo, Castlemaine, Maryborough, Daylesford, Ballarat and surrounding areas when heaths, waxflowers and wattles should be at their best. Tour commences on Thursday 12 September, returning on Monday 16 September 1991. Further details in the *Autumn botanic news.*

EXPLORING JAPAN 1991

27 October to 16 November.

Autumn colours, traditional gardens, cultural splendour and culinary delights are all included in this exclusive journey to Japan. Stroll through the famous gardens of Ritsur-in, Korakuen and Kenrokuen. Six days in Kyoto and three in Kanazawa will allow time to appreciate the wealth of garden and landscape diversity. Relax in a thermal spa, explore the ancient halls of Himeji Castle, wander down narrow lanes past 16th century houses, experience the village life of rural Japan.

This is no ordinary tour. Special arrangements are being made for you to enter gardens and craft artisans' workshops seldom seen by the average tourist. It is also a limited number tour with 20 places only and preference will be given to members. The estimated cost is $5,800 per person (shared accommodation).

For reservations, complete and return the enclosed booking form as soon as possible, with a deposit of $200 per person. Places will be allocated in strict order of priority of receipt.

Itinerary and further details available from
Lesley Clark (03) 807 3984 or Beth Higgs (03) 850 5908.

RECENT EVENTS

Botanical Illustration Workshops 11 Sept., 9 Oct. and 13 Nov.

Botanical Art Workshops – Guest Artist, Jenny Phillips 24 October – a thoroughly inspiring day. Jenny's enthusiasm for her subject together with her great talent were much appreciated by everyone.

North Borneo Tour 9-27 September – The first overseas tour of the Friends in September, lasting almost three weeks, was highly successful. Twenty-one enthusiastic participants explored national parks, native villages, towns and beaches of Sarawak and Sabah in North Borneo. There were giant rain forest trees, ferns, orchids, rhododendrons, pitcher plants, and many other botanical delights in abundance. Some of the highlights were: a longboat trip up the Skrang River through jungle to stay overnight at an Iban Longhouse, walks in Bako National Park, a visit to Niah Caves, a quiet day in a beautiful island off Kota Kinabalu, four days at Mt. Kinabalu National Park where some of the group climbed Mt. Kinabalu (13,455 ft.), bathing at Poring Hot Springs, a canopy walk through the tree tops, and a most instructive visit to the Agricultural Research Station at Tenom.

"Ecology and Landscape Management" 19 September – Stephen Forbes, Acting Superintendent of the Royal Botanic Gardens.

Newcomers' Welcome 10 October.

"Air Pollution and the Natural Environment: How Plants Cope with Stress and Damage" 15 October – Dr Clive Jones, a Churchill fellow from the USA, a joint function with the ESU.

Portland Tour 26-30 October – Perfect weather accompanied the group of thirty-one Friends who joined the five-day tour to Portland at the end of October. Guided by Dr Jim Willis, the Group visited Ballarat and Warrnambool where they were warmly welcomed by the Friends of these two Botanical Gardens. In Portland the Superintendent of Parks and Gardens, Alan Hyder, was extremely helpful. Two days were spent exploring Mt. Richmond and Lower Glenelg National Parks and surrounding areas. On the last day, Portland Aluminium Smelter was visited and their extensive reaforestation program was inspected. Three lovely private gardens were visited: 'Titanga' at Lismore where we were greeted by Val and Chris Lang, the Learmouth garden at Portland (an added bonus) and Alistair and Julie Watt's garden at Lavers Hill. A warm "thank you" to Dr Jim Willis for sharing his vast botanical knowledge with us on this happy trip.

"Preserving Native Grasslands" 18 October – cancelled (sadly).

Plant Sales Days 20 and 21 October – The sale, despite the downpour, grossed $18,761.65 over the two days. Congratulations to all concerned.

Annual General Meeting 22 October – preceded by port and dessert.

North Borneo Tour Reunion – a very happy reunion of the members of the North Borneo Tour Group took place at the home of Sue and Chester Keon-Cohen on Friday 9 November. We thank Sue and Chester for their very warm hospitality and generosity.

Westport and Bleak House 14 November – a delightful day.

"Art into Landscape – The Renaissance Gardens of Italy" 19 November – Mr Anthony Mugg – an interesting and informative evening.

Staff Trip to Adelaide 23 November – (a talk about impressions scheduled for 4 February 1991).

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Annual General Meeting was held on Monday 22 October 1990 with approximately 85 members and several visitors present.

The 1990/91 Council was elected as follows:

President	Mr David Wilkinson
Vice-Presidents	Mrs Lesley Clark
	Mrs Golda Isaac
Secretary	Mr Lawrence Cohn
Treasurer	Mr David Taplin
Members	Mr Philip Ayton
	Mrs Eve Brunner
	Mrs Louise Coronel
	Mr Neil Robertson

During the meeting Mr Frank V. Philliips was elected an Honorary Life Member of the Friends. After the formal meeting, The Hon. Steve Crabb, Minister for Conservation and Environment, addressed the meeting and responded to questions.

FRIENDS' SHOP

Let us help you with your last minute Christmas shopping. We have a wide selection of gifts for gardeners, including books, gloves that protect your arms when pruning, kneeling pads, hats, etc. Small wooden bowls turned from fallen limbs or trees from the Gardens are selling well. They would make an excellent gift – they could be filled with nuts or sweets, written information is provided with each bowl; a new item – wooden keyrings, and 1991 calendars and diaries also available. We are hoping to have our very own "Friends" aprons and carry bags by early January.

GROWING FRIENDS

Despite poor weather on the Sunday, hundreds of Melburnians flocked to the Growing Friends' annual plant sale 20-21 October, and sales totalled more than $18,000.

Our thanks to all members who helped before, during and after the weekend, sometimes in uncomfortable conditions.

The following weekend witnessed another successful plant sale, thanks to Sheila Carew who allowed us to sell plants at her garden, opened to the public through the Victoria's Garden Scheme.

Members will once again be able to buy selected plants on the last Friday of every month in 1991, beginning in February. We look forward to seeing you!

THE FRIENDS AND VOLUNTARY GUIDES

A large sunny meeting/reading/lounge room has been made available for use by members of the Friends of the Royal Botanic Gardens and for the Voluntary Guides. It is upstairs in the Astronomer's Residence and is at present unfurnished. We wonder if any of our Friends have any appropriate furniture for which they have no use, such as coffee tables, easy chairs, lamps and perhaps a small work table? We are fortunate that we will have the use of a number of von Mueller's dining chairs which at present are being re-upholstered. Should you have anything that you think might be suitable, would you please leave a message with Margaret MacGregor (650 6398) who will pass it on to the Furnishing Sub-Committee who will contact you as soon as possible.

FROM THE HERBARIUM

The National Herbarium of Victoria was host recently to the two-day 18th annual general meeting of CHAH (Council of Heads of Australian Herbaria) with Jim Ross as chairman. CHAH meetings are lively occasions for the consideration of common issues and for mutually beneficial planning. Outside of meeting hours Herbarium staff thoroughly enjoyed the opportunities to converse with their interstate colleagues.

All manuscripts for volume 1 of the Flora of Victoria are now in the hands of the editor, Don Foreman, and going through the editorial process. The next issue of Muelleria, which includes 12 research articles and descriptions of several new Victorian species, has gone to the printer and will roll off the press early next year.

Botanical accounts for the Flora of Victoria are proceeding with Don despatching his manuscript on Petrophile, and Helen Aston's account of the aquatic family Podostemaceae appearing in the latest volume, vol. 18. A meeting of the editorial committee of the "Flora of Australia" project, of which Jim Ross is the current chairman, was recently held at our Herbarium. This is the first such meeting to be held outside of Canberra and was nicely timed to follow the CHAH meeting and minimise travelling costs for joint participants.

As the weather improves there has been a surge of field work by Herbarium staff. David Albrecht has spent four weeks in Western Australia gathering over 600 selected species for the Herbarium collections. Philip Short is supposedly on holiday in W.A. but using much of his time while there to collect for his revision of the "daisies" genus *Brachyscome*. Five other botanists and technicians have had brief and successful collecting expeditions into the north-west Mallee and the north-east highland areas of the State.

Work on Herbarium curation received a big boost when the "Friends" provision of funds for a six-month salary enabled the employment of Tom May, an enthusiastic and knowledgeable mycologist. Tom, with the help of our technical staff, made tremendous strides in updating the names on our Australian fungal collections and in rearranging them into an accessible order.

Volunteers continue to give good service in mounting Herbarium specimens and to enjoy themselves in the process. Anyone who feels they might be interested in this activity could contact Cathryn Coles or Helen Aston at the Herbarium, phone 650 9424.

Helen Aston
Senior Botanist.

CONDOLENCES

The Friends extend their sympathy and loving thoughts to our active Friend, Peg Jones, who lost her husband, Lloyd, and to Mrs Arthur Clark and her family; Elaine's mother, Mrs Tozer, who died some months ago, was until recently, a stalwart Friend of the Royal Botanic Gardens.

SPECIAL BENEFITS TO FRIENDS

The following nurseries and bookshop offer special discounts to Friends on production of their current membership card:–

Fryers' Nursery, 589 Glenferrie Road, Hawthorn.
Idaho Nurseries, 410 Waverley Road, East Malvern.
The Gardener's Bulleen Nursery, 105 Bridge Street, Bulleen.
The Arts Bookshop, 1067 High Street, Armadale.

FROM THE GARDENS

There has been quite a lot of coming and going among staff recently. Darren Edwards (Senior Gardener on Area A) is undertaking a three months exchange with the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew. Annette Lee is Acting Senior Gardener in Darren's absence. Izabella Karni, Leading Hand on Area B, is on exchange to Wellington Botanic Gardens in New Zealand for three months, returning in January.

The Gardens is interviewing for two new apprentices for 1991. In addition to the annual intake, we have been fortunate enough to take on three apprentices (two in the Gardens and one in the workshops) through Government training initiatives. Recent appointments include Daniel Lee (Australian Border), Bettina Peterson (Hopetoun Lawn), Mandy Halliman (Private Area, Government House) and Andrew Thompson (Arboriculture).

Congratulations to Ken Allen, Assistant Superintendent on reaching 35 years of service in the Gardens! An impressive achievement.

Out in the Gardens, the irrigation system for the Herb Garden, sponsored by the Friends, is now installed. The system will automically water the Herb Garden after closing. This will save Paul Gallagher, and Area C, hours of hand-watering each day, and will give the public better access to the garden. If you are visiting the Herb Garden over summer, look out for the red or pink flowering perennial, *Monarda didyma*, Bergamot. This attractive plant provides the flavouring in Earl Grey Tea. Another fragrant plant used in teas is *Aloysia triphylla*, Lemon Verbena. Also flowering now is the strongly aromatic *Salvia sclarea*, Clary Sage and the sweetly smelling *Oenothera biennis*, Evening Primrose.

Theft of plants from the Arid Garden (formerly the Cactus and Succulent Garden) is still a major problem. In an effort to deter pilfering, "B" and "C" Gates will be closed at 4.00 pm over summer. Despite the losses, the Arid Garden continues to take shape.

Renovation of the Tennyson Lawn Grotto Group (near "B" Gate) has begun. Two dangerous Lombardy Poplars and a number of other trees have been removed to improve the prospects for the remaining significant trees.

Some of you may have noticed the large yellow recycling bins at the Kiosk. The Gardens is now part of the MCC Restaurant Recycling Program. Please remember that the yellow bins are for glass bottles, aluminium cans and plastic drink containers. All other rubbish, including plastic bags, should go into the ordinary Gardens' bins.

Happy Summer in the Gardens!

Eve Almond
Interpretations Officer

This brochure is printed on recycled paper.

'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.'

Printed by Universal Printing Services, 39-43 Stawell Street, North Melbourne 3051.
Registered by Australia Post. Publication No. VBH 5419 ISSN 0817-550