

BOTANIC NEWS

FRIENDS OF THE ROYAL BOTANIC GARDENS, MELBOURNE INC.

SUMMER 1998/99



Secretary Lawrence Cohn introduces Sir Ninian at the Friends' Annual Meeting

RBG CRANBOURNE OFF-ROAD

There's excellent news at last about Ballarto Road at Cranbourne. The Minister for Planning, the Hon. Rob Maclellan, has accepted recommendations from an Independent Panel that the proposed new road should be abandoned and that the existing road reserve in RBG Cranbourne should be revoked.

This wonderful outcome has been achieved through the detailed work over the past five years of many past and present Cranbourne staff, in collaboration with the RBG's town planning consultants. We have been strongly supported throughout this time by the public advocacy and submissions of the Friends of RBG Cranbourne, particularly Mr Don Jewell and Mr Marshall Baillieu, and the Friends of RBG Melbourne. The RBG Board and I are most appreciative of all these important contributions, which have saved the Cranbourne Gardens from the severe environmental and amenity impacts of the proposed road. Now we can concentrate on creating the superb new Australian Garden, and on conserving the magnificent bush and wetlands which were threatened by the road.

Philip Moors

THE RIGHT HON. SIR NINIAN STEPHEN

We are honoured to welcome Sir Ninian Stephen, a neighbour and frequent walker in the Gardens, as our new President.

Sir Ninian was born in the UK, educated in the UK, Switzerland and Australia, and saw war service with the Australian Army between 1941 and 1946. He gained a law degree at the University of Melbourne, and had a distinguished legal career, culminating in his appointment as a Justice of the High Court of Australia and to the Privy Council of the United Kingdom.

Sir Ninian filled with great distinction the role of Governor-General of Australia from 1982 to 1989.

Since then he has held numerous appointments, including Australia's first Special Ambassador for the Environment, Chairman of the Constitutional Centenary Foundation, Chairman of the National Library of Australia, Chairman of Strand Two of the Talks on Northern Ireland, and Judge of the UN International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia. As we go to press, he is on a mission to Cambodia.

At the Mildura meeting of the Association of Friends of Botanic Gardens (Victoria) last May, Lady Valery Stephen confided that she and Sir Ninian were garden lovers in more senses of the word than one; he had proposed to her in the Albury Botanic Gardens! Sir Ninian and Lady Stephen are foundation members of the Friends of the Australian Inland Botanic Gardens at Mildura and Lady Stephen is their Patron.

Although they were one of Australia's most distinguished vice-regal couples, Sir Ninian and his wife do not wish to be regarded as lofty 'eminent persons'; they are just happy to be among Friends, so don't stand on ceremony...

SUMMER ACTIVITIES

DAY TOUR TO COUNTRY GARDENS AND WINERY - BANNOCKBURN, BATESFORD AND BELLARINE**Thursday 21 January****Bus departs from outside the National Gallery, St Kilda Road at 9.00am sharp.**

We have organised a very interesting tour as a treat for those Members and their friends who will remain in Melbourne during January.

How long is it since you were in a garden where the silence was broken only by the strong hum of bees and the singing of birds? That's what you'll experience in two country gardens owned by artists; DARRIWILL FARM at Bannockburn and PIRALILLIA at Batesford.

The DARRIWILL garden's treasure is a magnificent cork oak tree, and where a vineyard once stood there is an extensive planting of mature bunya bunyas, olives, claret ash and elm trees. The immediate surroundings of the bluestone homestead (1856) were extensively replanted in 1994 by Nellie and Dougal Ramsay, who are creating inspiring vistas down to the Moorabool River valley and the property's original orchards. They are planting indigenous trees around a newly-built lake.

An exhibition documenting the property's history has been set up in the stables, while the former bluestone winery now houses a farm shop and gallery with giftware and garden products designed by Dougal, a graphic artist.

We'll have morning tea/coffee on arrival at Darriwill.

Felicity and Peter Spear bought a 2ha paddock in 1978 and from it created PIRALILLIA, an informal country garden which skilfully combines native trees in copses and windbreaks with masses of glorious roses, lavender and perennials, herbs, vegetables, vines, fruit trees, bees, ducks and a dam. The planting comes to terms with the demanding Mediterranean-type climate and attracts around 50 species of birds. The property reflects both the environmental awareness and artistic flair of its owners. A yurt built by Peter provides Felicity with a studio close to nature.

We'll drive eastwards to the Bellarine Peninsula for lunch at STONEACRES FARM, Drysdale, in a cafe whose architecture is bound to surprise you. There's a nursery at this property, and 1.5ha of gardens (noted for heritage roses) and underplanted orchard for you to explore.

Nearby is VIEWS' END, another peaceful country garden with a lovely mixture of shady trees, roses, perennials, vegetables, fruit trees, exotic poultry, spectacular views, and the added attraction of a potter's studio. Particular attention has been devoted to the colour combinations in well-ordered garden beds and borders.

Finally, we're very fortunate to be able to visit SPRAY FARM at Drysdale - one of the earliest farms on the Bellarine Peninsula - which affords magnificent views over rolling pastures to the You Yangs, Melbourne and Port Phillip Bay. Its homestead, built in 1851, is included in the Victorian Heritage Register. The timber shutters which enclose the verandah are most unusual, as is the distinctly French character of the stable building and courtyard.

The family owners of nearby Scotchmans Hill, a vineyard growing Rhine Riesling, Sauvignon Blanc, Chardonnay and Pinot Noir grapes, have recently purchased Spray Farm and are restoring it. The former stables have already been transformed into a tasting room, and there we'll be able to sample and buy award-winning Scotchmans Hill wines.

We expect to return to the National Gallery by 5.30pm.

Cost: \$48 includes transport (airconditioned bus with seat belts), morning tea, lunch and entry fee to four gardens.

RSVP on enclosed booking form by Thursday 14 January.

FILM LUNCHEON*Elizabeth***Monday 15 February at 11.00am****Trak Cinema, 445 Toorak Road, Toorak**

A much-praised portrayal by Australian Cate Blanchett of one of history's most fascinating women, caught in an intriguing web of passion and power. The formidable Queen Elizabeth 1 was a young monarch of independent spirit, surrounded in her court by Sir Francis Walsingham (played by Academy Award-winning Geoffrey Rush), the Duke of Norfolk, Sir William Cecil and her true love, Robert Dudley.

Lunch (sandwiches, cake and tea/coffee/drink) follows the film. Parking in Tintern Avenue or Safeway carpark.

Admission \$12

RSVP by Monday 8 February on enclosed booking form

SNEAK PREVIEW, OBSERVATORY GATE**Friday 19 February at 5.30 for 6.00pm**

Be one of the first to tour the buildings, old and new, on the Observatory Gate* development. And inspect the Friends' new home, to be known as Gate Lodge. The large audience for Tracie Laws' talk about the Observatory site at our Annual Meeting was a clear indication of the great interest in this major development.

Come first to Gate Lodge, on Birdwood Avenue opposite the Shrine, for our house-warming, at which refreshments will be served.

At 6.00pm the very knowledgeable Wendy Williams, Project Officer for the development, will lead us on a tour of the site. We are fortunate to have this opportunity, some weeks before the area is open to the public.

Cost: \$8 for Friends \$12 for others

RSVP by Wednesday 17 February on enclosed booking form.

* Note: The Board has rejected the previously-approved title of 'Observatory Precinct'; 'Observatory Gate' has been reinstated.

BOTANICAL ART IN AUSTRALIA

Illustrated lecture by John Patrick

Tuesday 23 February at 5.30pm

See page 4.

THE NIGHT SKY



Wednesday 24 February at 8.30pm
Observatory Gate

Following closely on our twilight visit to the Observatory site on 19 February, this pilot tour will present a preview opportunity to learn about the night sky - to complete our knowledge of this exciting development. Participants will experience the night sky from both a cultural and scientific perspective.

As darkness falls, we'll hear a talk about astronomy before using the telescopes housed in the South Equatorial House and the Astrograph House. The tour will last about ninety minutes. Backup activities are being designed for the tour in the event of wet or cloudy weather.

The RBG Visitor Programs group will inaugurate public tours on Tuesday evenings from March, conducted by PhD students of astronomy and students trained in astrophysics. Gardens staff are organising this activity in consultation with the Astronomical Society of Victoria, which will continue to run tours for its own members.

Coffee and biscuits will be served in our Gate Lodge from 8.00pm before you gather by the new Visitor Centre at 8.30pm.

Cost: \$6 per person

RSVP by Monday 15 February on enclosed booking form.

DIARY DATES

Wednesday 17 March: Bus trip to The Perfumed Garden, Moorooduc, and Mornington Peninsula gardens

17 and 18 April: Annual Conference, Association of Friends of Botanic Gardens (Victoria) at the Warrnambool Botanic Gardens.



A CLEMATIS
FOR ALL
SEASONS

Illustrated talk by Bridget Gubbins

Wednesday 3 March

Morning tea from 10.00am. Talk at 10.30am

Mueller Hall, National Herbarium

Bridget is THE authority on Clematis and we're fortunate that not only will she speak, but will also have slides and flowers on this occasion. She'll also pass on her knowledge about propagation methods.

Bridget was a wholesale grower of Clematis when she lived on the edge of the Snowy Mountains in NSW. When faced with a move to the Bellarine Peninsula, she propagated and potted up two of each variety, reminiscent of Noah's Ark, and until about a year ago she held the Clematis Collection of the Ornamental Plant Collections Association. However, another more recent move from Connewarre to an average suburban block at Barwon Heads forced Bridget to disperse more than half of the 140 varieties she had. But she continues to observe, record and enjoy a 'must have' group of 60 in her new garden.

Bridget is the author of *Growing Clematis*, published by Hyland House in 1997.

Cost: Friends \$8

Others \$12

RSVP on enclosed booking form by Friday 26 February

WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS

Thursday 11 March at 5.30pm

Mueller Hall, National Herbarium

Invitations will be sent to recently-joined Friends to attend this 'orientation' function, at which a guided walk follows refreshments and an introduction to the organisation.

Those who have joined the Friends since our last Welcome on 9 September will automatically receive a notice, but if you have become a Member in the past year or so and have not been able to attend a previous Welcome function, please telephone the office (9650 6398) if you would like an invitation for this occasion.

BOTANICAL ILLUSTRATORS

Photo: D Hancock



Celia Rosser, John Patrick and Anita Barley at the opening of the Art of Botanical Illustration Exhibition

THE DEVELOPMENT OF BOTANICAL ART IN AUSTRALIA

**Illustrated Twilight Lecture by John Patrick
Tuesday 23 February at 5.30pm for 6.00pm
Mueller Hall, National Herbarium**

John Patrick is well-known as a landscape designer and media presenter on gardening topics. His engaging speech opening *The Art of Botanical Illustration* revealed another area of expertise - his considerable knowledge of, and appreciation for, Australian botanical art. We have invited him to share further with us the results of his long-term studies into this most interesting aspect of our cultural history.

John will survey the work and careers of those whose talents have contributed to the development of botanical art in Australia: explorers and convicts; botanists; ladies of leisure and some scoundrels along the way - all are included in this cross-section of botanical artists.

This will be a superbly illustrated lecture, with slides from John's own collection. All are welcome; it will be of general interest and not restricted to botanical illustrators.

Refreshments at 5.30pm, lecture at 6.00pm

Cost: Friends \$8.00 Others \$12

RSVP by Friday 19 February on enclosed booking form

TUESDAY PAINTERS GROUP (The Whirly Birds)

This informal group meets on two or three Tuesdays each month in the Whirling Room. We plan to continue in 1999, commencing on 2 February.

Telephone Mary Gregory on 9836 8587 if you wish to join, or have any queries. Cost is \$15 a quarter or \$2.50 a session.

The Art of Botanical Illustration

Congratulations to all members who gave their time and talents to another successful and highly-praised exhibition.

We welcomed over 3,600 visitors overall and sold paintings valued at \$69,000 - 112 out of the 178 works on display.

We are greatly indebted to Patricia Williams, John Patrick and Ian Clarke who put in a very long day selecting the works for display from a total of 317 submitted.

The growing fame of our exhibition was evidenced by the fact that we had entries from Queensland, NSW, South Australia and Tasmania this year.

The opening was attended by 300 guests who heard from Sir Ninian Stephen (at his first official function as the Friends' President), Dr Philip Moors and John Patrick. John officially opened the exhibition with a fascinating and entertaining potted history of botanical art in Australia. (Elsewhere on this page, see item about our February meeting.)

The exhibition this year was facilitated by the installation of a new track lighting system in Mueller Hall as a donation by the Friends with the generous assistance of Expohire - a West Melbourne business which has given us great support over the years.

Our grateful thanks to everyone involved, including the relatives and friends of our members and the staff and management of the RBG.

*Louise Coronel
Convener*

LADY JOAN LAW-SMITH

A ceremony to commemorate the life of Lady Joan Law-Smith, noted as a wonderful garden creator and artist, was held at Gardens House on 29 October 1998. Her daughters, Anne Wyld and Susannah Clarke, planted a small tree, *Stewartia monadelpha*, in the garden as a growing memorial.

Lady Law-Smith, a generous donor to the Gardens, served on the committee of the Maud Gibson Trust from 1979 to 1990. Her guide book to the Gardens was published in 1984, and the 1999 National Trust desk diary features her delicate watercolour drawings of birds and flowers. The Australian Garden History Society in the Great Melbourne Telescope building has a limited number of diaries available. Telephone: 9650 5043.

ACQUISITIONS FOR THE STATE BOTANICAL COLLECTION

The Friends purchased three paintings from the exhibition for donation to the State Botanical Collection, which is held in the Herbarium Library:

Wahlenbergia multicaulis by Enid Mayfield; *Ulva* sp. & *Enteromorpha* sp. by Beth Palmer and *Pterostylis* by Jan Woodman.

Factors which influenced the selection committee from the Herbarium were:

- * Beth's painting of green seaweed depicted a branch of flora that is rarely illustrated
- * Jan's group of five different species of orchids depicted them in their forest-floor habitat
- * Enid's bluebell was a classic botanical drawing with dissections and magnifications.

Other acquisitions for the State Botanical Collection were *Clivia miniata* by Helen Burrows; *Caleana major* by Beverley Graham; *Brachychiton acerifolius* by Mary Gregory and *Echinops* by Dolores Skowronski-Malloni (purchased with funds from a donation in 1996 from the George Pappas family), and *Amanita muscari* by Jennifer Wilkinson (purchased from RBG funds).

HOLIDAY ILLUSTRATION WORKSHOPS

Dianne Emery is proposing to run some Botanical Illustration workshops in January:

- * One-day introductory workshop for beginners (all materials provided) - 10.00am - 3.30pm.
\$60 for Friends, \$70 for others.
- * Four-day introductory workshop for beginners (16 hours). \$120 for Friends, \$130 for others.
- * Two-day introduction to the microscope - dissection and enlargement (this workshop will be for students with some experience, and is subject to the availability of equipment). Numbers strictly limited.
\$70 for Friends, \$80 for others.
- * Two-day drawing workshop for students with some experience. An opportunity to work in black and white, to develop their tonal work and general drawing skills.
\$60 for Friends, \$70 for others.

Normal term classes will resume in February 1999. For more information and dates, contact Dianne Emery on 9523 5397.

WANTED: The Botanical Illustrators need a librarian for occasional help in managing our book collection.

An archivist would also be very useful. It would be appreciated if any potential volunteers with relevant experience could telephone Louise Coronel on 9827 5910.

Monthly Botanical Illustration Workshops

In the Whirling Room Great Melbourne Telescope Building

The monthly meetings of this group, held on the second Tuesday of each month from February to December, will continue in 1999. Plans for these meetings are fluid, and members will be invited to make suggestions for the program at the first meeting (10.00am - 3.00pm) on 9 February and during the year. Anita Barley will not be continuing her workshops. The cost of the meetings will depend on plans made, and will be decided when the program is finalised.

Whatever is planned, it is sure to be a stimulating year with time to paint together, learn more skills, share experiences and enjoy each other's company. The workshops cater for illustrators of all levels.

There may be an opportunity for several newcomers to join this group; please telephone Judy Jarman on 9870 7236 if you are interested. **Continuing members should confirm by Tuesday 2 February on enclosed booking form.**

BOTANICAL EMBROIDERERS

Lesley Clark instigated our Botanical Embroiderers' group in 1994 under the guidance of Wanda McPherson of the Embroiderers' Guild of Victoria. The group has produced interesting and beautiful work, employing many forms of embroidery. All members have learned a great deal, and it has been rewarding for them to use this knowledge in larger projects.

However, the group has been very small and it has been decided to conclude the activity - in this form and for the time being at least - in December.

If you have any queries about future meetings of this group, please telephone the Friends' office on 9650 6398.

SPEAKERS

Help us to spread the word about our beautiful Botanic Gardens and the role of the Friends. If you know of any group or organisation setting up its program for next year and needing a speaker, please suggest that they use one of ours.

Talks, which can be accompanied by slides, are free. For information and bookings, telephone Janet Thomson on 9571 9448 or the Friends' office on 9650 6398.

GIFT MEMBERSHIP

A gift of Friends' membership would make an ideal Christmas present for someone on your list.

Phone the Friends' office on 9650 6398 and we'll arrange to send a membership card with your greeting.

GROWING FRIENDS

The Spring Plant Sale was a great success - the weather was just beautiful; the plants appreciated it and looked very handsome. Over \$24,000 was taken on the week-end.

The Autumn 1999 Sale will take place on 20 and 21 March.

The special Saturday morning opening of the Nursery in September for Members was well attended and plants to the value of \$2,000 were sold. **We will repeat this 'privilege' opening five weeks prior to the Autumn sale, on Saturday 13 February from 9.00am to noon.**

The Nursery is still open regularly for Friends on Fridays from 10.00am to 1.00pm except for Christmas Day and New Year's Day.

Growing Friends Gift Vouchers are an excellent option when you're thinking of presents at Christmas time. These may be obtained from the Friends' office or the Growing Friends' Nursery.



WINNING GARDEN DESIGNS

The Royal Botanic Gardens hit the jackpot at the national awards ceremony of the Australian Institute of Landscape Architects held in Sydney on 19 September.

The RBG Melbourne Master Plan won the Conservation Planning Award, and the Australian Garden at RBG Cranbourne won the Masterplanning Award for its landscape designers Taylor and Cullity with Paul Thompson. To have received two of the national awards is an outstanding achievement, and it confirms the exceptional quality of both these projects. They were competing in very strong fields of projects from other States - and in the Australian Garden's case, received the award ahead of the landscape design for the Sydney Olympics site at Homebush. Both the Master Plan and the Australian Garden design have set new directions and standards for botanic gardens in Australia.

Earlier this month, the RBG's Agricultural Chemicals Policy was one of the four finalists in the annual Victorian WorkCover Awards in the category 'Best Solution to a Workplace Safety Issue'.

The RBG is proud to have made the finals, which received a lot of media coverage and government attention. The success of the RBG in reaching the finals highlights the quality of attention given to Occupational Health and Safety matters by staff.

LOST PROPERTY

We have two large black umbrellas (one folding) left at Gardens House on 15 September.

Please phone the office on 9650 6398 to reclaim.



Photo: V. Morrison

Penny Dunn of Florilegia Nursery at Mt Macedon presented a very special talk in September. About 20 specimens of rare and enchanting woodland plants were passed around for close inspection.

HANDS-ON GARDENING FRIENDS

In the Spring *Botanic News*, Friends were invited to express interest in working as volunteers in the new Perennial Border. Five excellent applicants were interviewed, with Kate Philip and Leanne Barnes being appointed to the two positions.

Kate and Leanne are spending four hours each Wednesday morning during a three-month trial period - planting, weeding, tip pruning, labelling, answering visitors' questions and learning to identify all the plants in the border.

Already some plants are in flower, and the bed should present a mass of colour by late summer.

THE MAUD GIBSON TRUST

presents

GARDENS OF CALIFORNIA AND ARIZONA

Thursday 18 February at 5.30pm
Mueller Hall, National Herbarium

Jill Burness, on the staff of RBG Cranbourne, will present this illustrated talk describing the tour Cranbourne Friends made to the USA last autumn.

Refreshments will precede the talk.

Cost \$12

RSVP: RBG Melbourne, tel. 9252 2300

Proceeds to Friends of RBG Cranbourne

Photo: A. Simon



Nada Jennet (left) with Anna Denton from the Activities Sub-Committee. In September and October, Nada gave two wonderful illustrated lectures about notable British gardens.

CHINESE PLANTS AND OTHER TREASURES

Terry Smyth returned from China on 16 November with 'souvenirs', including three interesting bamboo species, a yellow camellia, seeds including those of another yellow camellia, dried specimens for the Herbarium, books for the Library, slides and a lot of information in her head!

The Friends provided almost \$14,000 to enable Terry, who looks after the Chinese Collection in the RBG, to accept an invitation for a secondment at Kunming Botanical Garden in Yunnan Province between July and November. On this occasion, plant acquisition was incidental to Terry's main mission; her expertise was sought as a horticulturist to pass on Australian methods of managing plant collections, especially building up their monocots garden.

After a few days back at the Gardens to distribute the treasures and deal with much associated paperwork, Terry will be on leave until 21 December. The Friends can look forward to an illustrated talk about her latest China visit, probably next March.

However, more immediately, we will convene an informal meeting with Terry for interested people about the International Horticultural Exposition to be held in Kunming from 1 May to 31 October 1999. **The Friends are considering organising a visit to this show 'Man and Nature - Marching into the 21st Century' and perhaps some travel elsewhere in China. We would like to canvass your possible interest (no obligation, of course) before going any further with this project. Please tick the box on the booking form if you'd like to know more.** Terry saw some preparations, including wonderful architecture on the site, and heard, among other things, that 200 species of bamboo would be on display!

Gardens House looked magnificent on 15 September when more than 20 generous floral designers donated flower arrangements for Spring, In and Out of the Gardens. A silent auction, reception and afternoon viewing raised over \$2,500. Special guests included the Governor and Lady Gobbo, Mrs Mavis Willis and 104-year-old Mrs Dorothy Jessep who lived in Gardens House from 1941-1957. This striking arrangement of tropical plants was created by Flowers Vasette.

VOLUNTEERS

The Friends will have a new home next year - Gate Lodge on Birdwood Avenue. We expect that this prominent position will lead many visitors to call in seeking directions and assistance.

We are seeking volunteers to help the paid office staff in providing this service for both the Gardens and the Friends. Duties will include answering the telephone and taking phone bookings for functions, directing people to the Gardens and indicating facilities available.

If you have some free time and would like to commit yourself for duty once a month, please contact the Friends' office on 9650 6398. The proposal, at present, is to have two shifts - one 10.00am to 1.00pm and the other 1.00pm to 4.00pm. Tea and coffee will be provided and other members may call in to have a cuppa with you.

Our move will probably take place in February, and a gathering of prospective volunteers will be held either in late January or early February to start this new venture.

We are always happy to hear from Friends willing to join our catering group.

Also, we would be relieved to enlist the aid of anyone conversant with projectors and microphones, who could supervise their trouble-free operation at our meetings in Mueller Hall.

If you can help, please contact the Friends office on 9650 6398.

Photo: A. Simon



1998 ANNUAL MEETING

We had a full house of 134 Members for the Annual Meeting on 10 November, providing an impressive debut for our new President, Sir Ninian Stephen. It also demonstrated the Friends' great interest in the Observatory Gate development, the subject of an informative presentation by our guest speaker, Tracie Laws (Director of Public Programs and Development Division at the RBG). We are grateful to Sir Ninian and Tracie for their contribution to the evening, and also to our caterers; their provision of dessert and port instilled a sense of goodwill before the audience settled down for the serious business of the evening.

The following were re-elected to fill the vacant positions on the Council until the year 2000: Vice-President - Louise Coronel; Treasurer - David Baumgartner; Ordinary Members - Sharon Beaman, John Hawker, Janet Thomson and Catherine Trinca.

Honorary Life Membership was bestowed upon Louise Coronel and Heather Ironmonger, both Council members, and Robyn Tymms, who serves on the Activities Subcommittee.



Photo: D. Ironmonger

Heather, Louise and Robyn

HONORARY LIFE MEMBERS

Friends previously awarded Honorary Life Membership are: Philip Ayton; Lydia Bartlett; Eve Brunner; David Churchill; Sylvia Churchill; Lesley Clark; Lawrence Cohn; Sir Rupert Hamer; Beth Higgs; Golda Isaac; Gillian Kirk and Frank Phillips.

Tributes to Honorary Life Members

Beth Higgs recalled meeting LOUISE CORONEL 15 years ago in the developmental years of the Friends. 'She agreed to join our committee and has been with us ever since', Beth said. 'While a young mother with a very young child, Louise was nevertheless a thoughtful contributor with a willingness to apply herself to any number of tasks. Of these, her outstanding contribution has been of the formation of the Botanical Illustrators group, whose fourth biennial exhibition we have just witnessed. The group has become known Australia-wide, bringing interstate contributors to our exhibitions, students to our classes and membership to our organisation. As far as I can gather there is only a handful of botanic gardens around the world with associated professional training for botanical illustrators. I am proud to say Melbourne is among them - only the third, I think.'

Beth said that Louise had set a very high standard and had made an incalculable contribution to the Friends.

David Plant noted that HEATHER IRONMONGER was introduced to the Friends in 1992 by Eve Almond (then on the RBG staff); they had worked together on the establishment of the Register of Significant Trees when Heather was at the Department of Conservation, Forests and Lands.

Subsequently Heather became editor of the Friends' *Botanic Magazine* and the quarterly newsletter *Botanic News*. 'It wasn't long before Heather was elected a Member of Council', David added. 'Heather brings to all her editorial work great craftsmanship with words, and a keen eye for detail. These attributes together with her meticulous preparation culminate, as far as the Friends are concerned, with the superb magazine - the *Botanic Magazine* - of which she has produced three editions. Heather has been extremely dedicated in her support of the Friends, not only with the magazine, but in so many other areas of the Friends' activities', he said.

Golda Isaac met ROBYN TYMMS at a Newcomers' Welcome in 1990, and soon learned that Robyn had great feelings for the Gardens, was a plantsman (though a modest one) and loved to work with flowers. 'I later discovered it was flowers, foliage and fruit that she could weave into highly original creations', Golda said. As a member of the activities Committee, Robyn has made posies for speakers, distinguished guests and Members in and out of hospital, and has arranged flowers for all our meetings.

'Robyn's floral arrangements are an expression of her highly professional skills, and her artistry has brought recognition and acclaim for the Friends,' Golda said. She mentioned three notable examples of Robyn's work as a great committee participator: her decorations for the Winter Solstice Dinner and for the Grand Ball held at Government House in 1996, and her major role in the recent function - *Spring In and Out of the Gardens* - at Gardens House.

'Robyn, you have generously shared your considerable talents and your warmth with the Friends for many years', Golda concluded.

SUMMER 1998/99 BOTANIC NEWS
BOOKING FORM

GEE LONG AREA AND BELLARINE

Bus trip, Thursday 21 January
Leaves National Gallery, St Kilda Rd at 9.00am

No..... of persons @ \$48

TOTAL: \$ _____

RSVP by 14/1/99

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BUS TOUR INFORMATION: Please note that you must have an entree card to join any bus tour. If you have sent your money with a stamped self-addressed envelope but have not received a card, please check with the Friends' office on 9650 6398 prior to the day of the tour to ensure you have been allocated a seat on the bus.

FILM LUNCHEON: ELIZABETH

Monday 15 February at 11.00am
Trak Cinema, 445 Toorak Road, Toorak

No..... @ \$12

TOTAL: \$ _____

RSVP by 8/2/99

Please return the relevant section of this form with remittance and stamped addressed envelope to: Friends of Royal Botanic Gardens National Herbarium, Birdwood Ave, South Yarra 3141.

Telephone: (03) 9650 6398

Cheques/Postal orders payable to:

Friends of the Royal Botanic Gardens, Melbourne Inc.

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

TEL: _____

SUMMER 1998/99 BOTANIC NEWS
BOOKING FORM

SNEAK PREVIEW, OBSERVATORY GATE

Friday 19 February at 5.30pm for 6.00pm

No..... of Friends @ \$8 \$ _____

No..... of Others @ \$12 \$ _____

TOTAL: \$ _____

RSVP by 17/2/99

THE DEVELOPMENT OF BOTANICAL ART
IN AUSTRALIA

Illustrated Twilight Lecture by John Patrick

Tuesday 23 February at 5.30pm for 6.00pm

Mueller Hall, National Herbarium

No..... of Friends @ \$8 \$ _____

No..... of Others @ \$12 \$ _____

TOTAL: \$ _____

RSVP by 19/2/99

THE NIGHT SKY: ASTRONOMICAL TOUR OF
OBSERVATORY

Wednesday 24 February at 8.00 for 8.30pm

No..... @ \$6 **TOTAL: \$** _____

RSVP by 15/2/99

Please return the relevant section of this form with remittance and stamped addressed envelope to: Friends of Royal Botanic Gardens, National Herbarium, Birdwood Ave, South Yarra 3141.

Telephone: (03) 9650 6398

Cheques/Postal orders payable to:

Friends of the Royal Botanic Gardens, Melbourne Inc.

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

TEL: _____

SUMMER 1998/99 BOTANIC NEWS
BOOKING FORM

A CLEMATIS FOR ALL SEASONS

Illustrated talk by Bridget Gubbins

Wednesday 3 March at 10.00am for 10.30am

Mueller Hall, National Herbarium

No..... of Friends @ \$8 \$ _____

No..... of Others @ \$12 \$ _____

TOTAL: \$ _____

RSVP by 26/2/99

INTERNATIONAL HORTICULTURAL
EXPOSITION IN KUNMING

I would be interested
to learn more

RSVP by 14/1/99

MONTHLY BOTANICAL ILLUSTRATION
WORKSHOPS

I wish to continue my membership
of this group

RSVP by 2/2/99

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

Please return the relevant section of this form with remittance and stamped addressed envelope to: Friends of Royal Botanic Gardens, National Herbarium, Birdwood Ave, South Yarra 3141.

Telephone: (03) 9650 6398

Cheques/Postal orders payable to:

Friends of the Royal Botanic Gardens, Melbourne Inc.

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

TEL: _____

SPECIAL EVENTS IN THE ROYAL BOTANIC GARDENS, MELBOURNE

DECEMBER

OUTDOOR THEATRE

MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING

Commencing Wednesday 9 December.

Monday to Saturday, 8.30pm

Tickets at F Gate or Athenaeum Theatre, tel. 9650 1500

WIND IN THE WILLOWS

Commencing Monday 21 December

Monday to Saturday, 11.00am and 6.00pm

Tickets at F Gate or Athenaeum Theatre, tel. 9650 1500

MOONLIGHT CINEMA

Arthouse, classic and cult films

Commencing Friday 18 December

Wednesday to Sunday

Screening details: 1900 933 899

Ticket sales at D Gate from 7.30pm, or from

Ticketmaster 136 100

ABORIGINAL HERITAGE WALKS WITH

ABORIGINAL GUIDE

Every Thursday. Duration 90 minutes

Bookings essential

Contact: 9252 2358

WHAT'S ON IN THE RBG

Please note that these events incur a charge and require prior booking, so it's important that you contact the listed phone number.

Also, please appreciate that, after *Botanic News* goes to press, it is likely that additional events may be arranged for late in the quarter

JANUARY

SCHOOL HOLIDAY ACTIVITIES

MAGIC, MOONBEAMS AND MUCH MUCH MORE

Suitable for ages 4 to 8 years only.

Information and bookings contact: 9252 2358

OUTDOOR THEATRE

WIND IN THE WILLOWS

Monday to Saturday, 11.00am and 6.00pm

Until 9 January

Tickets at F Gate or Athenaeum Theatre, tel. 9650 1500

TOAD OF TOAD HALL

11 - 23 January

Monday to Saturday, 11.00am and 6.00pm

Tickets at F Gate, or Athenaeum Theatre, tel. 9650 1500

MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING

Monday to Saturday, 8.30pm

Tickets at F Gate or Athenaeum Theatre, tel. 9650 1500

MOONLIGHT CINEMA

Arthouse, classic and cult films

Throughout January

Wednesday to Sunday

Screening details: 1900 933 899

Ticket sales at D Gate from 7.30pm, or from

Ticketmaster 136 100

ABORIGINAL HERITAGE WALKS WITH

ABORIGINAL GUIDE

Every Thursday. Duration 90 minutes

Bookings essential . Contact: 9252 2358

FEBRUARY

GUIDED TWILIGHT STROLL

Thursday 4 and Tuesday 9 at 6.00pm

Bookings essential

Contact: 9252 2300

GUIDED BIRD AND NATURE WALKS

Thursday 18 and Sunday 21 at 8.00am

Bookings essential

Contact: 9252 2300

MOONLIGHT CINEMA

Arthouse, classic and cult films

Throughout February

Wednesday to Sunday

Screening details: 1900 933 899

Ticket sales at D Gate from 7.30pm, or from

Ticketmaster 136 100

OUTDOOR THEATRE

MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING

Throughout February

Monday to Saturday, 8.30pm

Tickets at F Gate or Athenaeum Theatre, tel. 9650 1500

ABORIGINAL HERITAGE WALKS WITH

ABORIGINAL GUIDE

Every Thursday. Duration 90 minutes

Bookings essential

Contact: 9252 2358

MARCH GUIDED TWILIGHT STROLL

Tuesday 2 and Thursday 4 March at 6.00pm

Bookings essential.

Contact: 9252 2300

FRIENDS' SHOP

If you have been into the shop lately you will have noticed our bluestone planter troughs. These and the bird bath were made for us by Jock Langslow; the stone comes from an old viaduct near Castlemaine. Jock does beautiful stone work, including garden seats and tables. Obviously we can't display much of his work, so if you're interested in something different for your garden, give Jock a call on 018 506 910 and tell him Jill sent you! Our shop benefits from any orders you place with him.

Of great interest to needlework enthusiasts, we have Stewart Merrett's 'absolutely fabulous' cross stitch Fruit and Flower Alphabet Packs: a boxed collection of designs from A to Z, including two colour-coded graphs per project and large coloured pictures to follow - B for Banksia; I for Iris; X for Xanthorrhoea (black boy) and Z for hot pink Zinnias - \$50.00 per boxed set. Also in stock: two hard-to-get books - his Applique Alphabet, \$25.00 and his Applique Art, \$35.00.

A summer gift for outdoors - cotton picnic rugs in vibrant colours, \$19.95.

Lavender Country of Provence, \$27.50. It will make you want to leave home.

Pure Style Outside, \$32.00. Accessible ideas for making the most of outside spaces.

Going into our front window shortly - Christmas table linen; crisp white cotton table mats and runners embroidered with holly and berries; gold angels and fat green and gold Christmas trees. We also have a nice range of Christmas serviettes.

From us all here to you all out there, Season's Greetings and thank you for your support during 1998.

Jill Swann, Manager

A landmark for the mammoth Mueller Correspondence Project was reached on 19 November with the launch of 'Regardfully Yours' *Selected Correspondence of Ferdinand von Mueller 1840-59*. Covering 842 pages, this is only Volume 1! A leaflet with subscription details is available from Dr Monika Wells, 9252 2349.

RBG SUMMER HIGHLIGHTS

Hybrid Tea Roses bloom throughout the summer months, with the more delicate Species Rose Collection flowering in December and January.

In December, see the wonderful crinkle paper flowers of the Romneys in the Elisabeth Murdoch Californian Garden on the eastern border, and admire the voluptuous foliage of Hostas as they emerge in the Magnolia Bed.

The Water Conservation Garden and the Fern Gully will add a cool touch to your garden viewing in December and January, while water lilies illuminate the Nymphaea Lake in January and February.

Other highlights include the stately Magnolia Grandifloras and fruiting Cycads in January, hydrangeas, and the annual blaze of colour in the Canna and Dahlia beds. We expect the new Perennial Border to reveal its new colours during the summer months, also.

PARKING UPDATE

The Royal Botanic Gardens has been working with the City of Melbourne to improve visitor car parking facilities along Birdwood Avenue once the Observatory Gate opens to the public in February/March 1999.

Present 'all day' meter parking along Dallas Brooks Drive and Birdwood Avenue to the north-west of the Herbarium is likely to be replaced with two and three-hour spaces to accommodate visits to the Gardens.

Bus parking will be moved from its traditional location adjacent to the Garden of Remembrance to further west and east on both sides of the road. A delivery space will be provided adjacent to Gate Lodge, and an improved location has been selected for disabled parking.

Limited on-site parking within the Observatory grounds will be available to Royal Botanic Gardens permit holders only.

BENEFITS FOR FRIENDS

Both the Friends' Shop and the Gardens' Shop offer a 10 per cent discount on members' purchases over \$20.

The following businesses very kindly offer special discounts to Friends. *Please note: only a member presenting his/her signed current membership card may claim a discount. CARDS ARE NOT TRANSFERABLE.*

GILLS NURSERY (ex Fryers)

589 Glenferrie Rd, Hawthorn

5% off plants only

Idaho Nurseries

410 Waverley Rd, E. Malvern

10% off plants only

Bulleen Art and Garden

105 Bridge St, Bulleen

5% off seedlings

10% off potted plants

Town and Country Gardens

1280 Malvern Rd, Malvern

10% off everything

The Arts Bookshop

1067 High St, Armadale

Holmesglen College of TAFE

inc. the Victorian Schools Nursery

585 Waverley Rd, Glen Waverley

20% off everything. Note change

The Gardeners Corner Store

190-192 New St, Brighton

10% off everything

Collectors Corner

Springvale Rd, Keysborough

10% off all plants

Kew Nursery

Cnr High & Gladstone Sts, Kew

10% off all plants

Wolf Tools

675 Canterbury Rd, Surrey Hills

10% discount

Burwood Garden Patch

1418 Toorak Rd, Burwood

10% discount

Green Gables Nursery

1039 Whitehorse Rd, Box Hill

10% off all items except specials

Garden of Eden Nursery

33 Ferrars Street, Albert Park

10% discount off everything

The Cottage Garden Nursery

cnr Macedon Ave & Doncaster Rd

North Balwyn. \$20 per tray of seedlings (8 punnets), 10% off all other plants



Botanic News is produced quarterly for the Friends of the Royal Botanic Gardens, Melbourne Inc.

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

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FROM THE GARDENS AND HERBARIUM

We are now very close to finishing the Observatory Gate project. The heritage buildings have regained their pride and glory with careful restoration and fresh paint, the new Visitor Centre is almost complete, and the paving and landscaping are rapidly taking shape. La Trobe's Cottage has been moved about 80 metres to the southern side of Birdwood Avenue, near the Australian Centre for Contemporary Art. The cottage itself is now in a site more closely resembling its original location in Jolimont with a downhill view across lawns and large trees. We are planning to have the Official Opening of Observatory Gate in the first quarter of 1999, once the new Observatory Café and Gardens Shop have been fitted-out.

The Friends' new home in the Gate Lodge (its proper title!) is virtually finished, with the refurbishment funded by a grant of \$85,000 from the Friends. The structural repairs have been carried out and the new services, including the hydronic heating, installed. The painters have just completed their work inside and outside – and the Lodge looks superb in its new heritage colours.

The Bell Shed, a 1950s amenities building for Gardens' staff, has been demolished to make way for a new site to recycle green waste. Until recently this process occurred at the Fire Yard, a City of Melbourne site on the southern side of Birdwood Avenue. This area has now been cleared and is being landscaped and returned to public open space in the Domain. Part of our new waste recycling operation will be accessible to visitors so that we can provide information about waste management, recycling, mulching and composting.

The flying foxes are nursing their young at present, so we cannot

undertake any deterrent action until early next year. However, we are discussing strategies with the Department of Natural Resources and Environment, and with academics and scientists around Australia. This is a national problem; we're not alone in trying to find a solution, and realistically we're looking at a five-year plan rather than expecting to find a quick remedy.

I am most appreciative of the grants recently made by the Friends to projects at RBG Melbourne: the purchase of three artworks from the Botanical Illustrators' Exhibition for the State Botanical Collection (\$2,000); financial support for arboricultural staff to attend specialist seminars presented by an overseas expert in November (\$1,680); and two projects in Mueller Hall – the installation of improved lighting, which will also benefit exhibitions and other events in the Hall (approx. \$4000), and installation of black-out curtains (\$6,200). The new lighting was fitted in time for the Botanical Illustrators' Exhibition, enabling the superb collection of paintings to be seen to their best advantage.

Dr Marco Duretto has been appointed Manager of the Plant Sciences Branch in place of Dr Tim Entwisle, who has now taken up his senior appointment at RBG Sydney. Ms Jane Wing, resigned recently as Marketing Manager to care for her young daughter. After four years of consultancy work for the Gardens – firstly organising the 150th Anniversary celebrations and then managing our fundraising programs – Ms Nancy Staub left the RBG in October to undertake other consultancy work. We wish Tim, Jane and Nancy every success in their future careers.

Philip Moors
Director