



BOTANIC NEWS

WINTER 1985

FROM THE PRESIDENT

A well attended Annual General Meeting saw a return of office-bearers and Committee. Our thanks to the Director, Dr. David Churchill and his wife Sylvia for allowing us the pleasure of having a pre-meeting chicken and champagne get-together in the lovely grounds of 'Gardens House'. Special congratulations to Golda Isaac for her superb organisation and general overseeing of the recent highly successful Canberra trip.

On behalf of the Committee I wish to warmly welcome our new Friends. We look forward to meeting you at our forthcoming activities which we hope you will enjoy.

Frank Phillips

WHAT'S OUT IN THE GARDENS

From 'F' Gate a stroll along the Australian border is a must. Plants to look for are *Acacia alata*, Winged Wattle *Banksia spinulosa* Hairpin Banksia, *Correa spp.*, *Epacris longiflora*, Fuchsia Heath, *Melaleuca elliptica*, and *Stenocarpus sinuatus*, the Queensland Fire-wheel Tree. Returning by the Nymphaea Lily Lake there is a good specimen of *Gordonia axillaris* (a relative of the camellia) with creamy-white flowers up to 4" across. *Magnolia stellata*, Star Magnolia, is flowering in the Magnolia Bed and further on *prunus mume* 'Albaplana', a delightfully perfumed flowering apricot, while *Luculia gratissima*, with long tubular pink and white scented flowers is opposite the Camellia Bed. Past the Princes Lawn you'll see *Lantana montevidensis*, Weeping Lantana (S. America), with vibrant purple flowers, *Tibouchina urvilleana*, the Glory Bush (Brazil) and a good selection of *Chaenomeles cultivars* (Japanese Quince). Returning to 'F' Gate note *Mimusops obovatus*, Milkwood (S. Africa), with unusual white flowers. *Chimonanthus praecox*, 'Wintersweet', has almost transparent yellowish green, highly fragrant flowers and can be found in the triangular bed above the Bell Shed.

John Beetham,
Botanic Gardens

MEMBERS' ACTIVITIES

A NATURALIST'S VISIT TO THE WEST KIMBERLEYS.

Illustrated talk by Miss Helen Aston, Curator of Herbarium Collections. Wednesday 5 June 1985 at 10.30 a.m. Herbarium Auditorium, Birdwood Av., Sth. Yarra.

Helen edits 'Muellaria', the official botanical journal of the Herbarium and is a member of the Bird Observers Club and the Field Naturalists Club of Victoria. In 1984 Helen joined a naturalists' expedition to the Kimberleys, organised by the Western Australian Field Naturalists' Club, journeying in a 60 ft. fishing boat, with camp sites ashore, and travelling to the remote Prince Regent and Hunter Rivers examining the scenery, plants, animals, birds and geology of the area.

We look forward to hearing what Helen has to say and seeing the filmed record of a truly memorable trip. We hope you will join us.

Morning tea will be served.

RSVP
Robina Dickinson 20 8398
Beth Higgs 850 5908

Tickets at door.
Members\$3.00
Non-members\$4.00

TWILIGHT GATHERING CHINESE GARDENS

An illustrated talk by Mr. Art Truter, Landscape Planner for the Department of Conservation, Forests and Lands. Thursday 4 July 1985 at 5.30 p.m. The Astronomer's Residence, Birdwood Av., Sth. Yarra.

Art will show us how gardens have been designed in China primarily to harmonise with and complement the arts of that country, with particular emphasis on the present-day Chinese perception of the landscape. You may find you have built at quite the wrong angle for total harmony and then again may find everything is exactly as it should be. Come and hear Art and form your own conclusions.

Wine & Cheese
RSVP
Sylvia Churchill 63 3564
Beth Higgs 850 5908

Tickets at door.
Members\$3.00
Non-members\$4.00

HISTORY & TECHNIQUE OF NATURE PRINTING

An illustrated talk by Dr. Eric Hochberg, 1985 Science & Humanities Scholar, Museum of Victoria, Tuesday 6 August at 10.30 a.m., Herbarium Auditorium, Birdwood Av., Sth. Yarra.

Dr. Hochberg is in residence at the Museum of Victoria researching the history and technique of nature printing. He has found interesting examples of this art form in the National Herbarium Library and his talk and slides will highlight the printing of plant illustrations. Join us in this pre-Spring activity.

Morning tea will be served.

RSVP
Robina Dickinson 20 8398

Tickets at door.
Members\$3.00
Non-members\$4.00

SOME COMING EVENTS

September: Talk by Professor George Seddon, lecturer in Environmental Planning, Melbourne University.

October 18 - 23. Exhibition of Stan Kelly's Eucalyptus-paintings, art by Anita Podwyszynski, botanical illustrator, and fungi. Also slides and talk by Bruce Fuhrer during the Exhibition.

The Friends of the Royal Botanical Gardens Sydney are conducting a tour of Tasmania in October/November. Details from Jenny Stackhouse (02) 231 8182 or write c/- Friends of R.B.G. Sydney, Mrs. Macquarie's Rd., Sydney 2000.

TRAFFIC PROBLEMS

The Friends have formally expressed their opposition to the Road Construction Authority's proposal to terminate the six lane Westgate Freeway at St. Kilda Road along Grant Street. With no direct link from the Westgate to South Eastern Freeway a large volume of traffic would be forced to use surrounding streets to the detriment of the Gardens and immediate environs.

An alternative and permanent solution, a tunnel under the Domain to link the two freeways, has been recommended by concerned groups and supported by Carrick Chambers, Professor of Botany at Melbourne University. It has been demonstrated by Arthur Cairness, Project Manager of the Underground Loop (John Connell Group) that the proper construction of the tunnel would have no environmental impact on either the Gardens or the Domain.

CANBERRA TRIP

The Autumn trip to Canberra would make a delightful chapter in the education of any gardener. Golda's brilliantly efficient organisation enabled everyone to enjoy an interesting, varied, stimulating and happy holiday

The private gardens visited showed enormous variety from the evolution of Mr. and Mrs. Park's garden into small and studied areas of various cultures, to the contrasting natural woodland setting of Sir Harold and Lady White's garden. I don't know how many of us 'grew' as a result of the very efficient 'Jeffrey' sprinkler system at the Government nursery glasshouse catching us unawares and trying unsuccessfully to dampen our enthusiasm. Morning tea followed, then an escorted walk around the Yarralumla grounds with Lady Stephens, a charming hostess who made our morning a delightful occasion.

We were overwhelmed with the warmth and hospitality shown us by the Canberra people, the politicians, their wives, the University, the nurserymen, the staff at the Botanic Gardens, and most of all, the 'Friends' who made up the trip.

Jenny Phillips

GOODS FOR SALE

Our 'Childrens' Package' designed for the entertainment and instruction of young visitors to the Gardens, contains a beautiful black and white swan poster, a Junior Friend's badge and a colourful set of activity sheets. The names of our Friends are recorded so that they will receive an invitation to a special event at a later date. \$4.00 each.

A greeting card featuring a water colour of the rare *Sophora toromiro*. 75¢ each or \$4.00 for a set of 6.

Postcards of the Oak Lawn, Ornamental Lake or Fern Gully. 20¢ each.

Publications can be bought at the Friends' Information Desk at the Kiosk at weekends or at Herbarium Office during the week. Childrens' Package from Desk only, or order by mail. For \$4.70 each.

VON MUELLER TOMB RESTORED

A ceremony was held recently at the St. Kilda cemetery to mark the restoration of the tomb by G. Giannarelli & Sons who restored the tomb free of charge as a gesture towards Victoria's 150th anniversary.

SUBSCRIPTION REMINDER

Don't forget that the Friends' 1985 membership subscription is due. Please fill in the enclosed form and return it with your payment and a self-addressed, stamped envelope as soon as possible. Otherwise please hand the leaflet to a Friend and invite them to join.

'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 wherever possible.'