BOTANIC NEWS

WINTER 1990

FROM THE PRESIDENT

Congratulations are warmly extended to Golda Isaac on her appointment as Vice President at the meeting of the Council of the Friends of the Royal Botanic Gardens, Melbourne Incorporated at its meeting on Thursday 19 April 1990. As a leading light on your Council since its inception, Golda could not be better qualified to fill the role of co-Vice President with Eve Brunner, and it gives the Council great pleasure to be able to make this announcement.

Our role as Gardens' "watchdog", as well as fund raiser and promoter of the Gardens, is a very important one. If there are any areas within the Gardens that you feel deserve improvement, please write down your criticism, be it constructive or otherwise, and send it to us. It is only one's friends – loving friends – who are prepared to point out one's shortcomings in life!

The Friends of the Benalla Botanic Gardens warmly welcomed us on our visit in March to their area. Warrnambool Botanic Gardens are also to form a Friends' group. We, as mother Garden, will give as much assistance as possible to these groups. Our heritage of provincial gardens is rich in Victoria and there are plenty of opportunities for Friends' groups to evolve.

The Friends' Shop continues to trade well and through the fine autumnal weather our budget figures have actually been exceeded.

The Growing Friends are propagating rare plants over this winter to stock their Spring Plant Sale over two days – 20 and 21 October 1990. The roll-a-door between the Rat House and the plants is now installed and operating successfully.

We have established a Projects Sub-Committee from the Council of the Friends, namely Philip Ayton (Convenor), David Taplin and Louise Coronel. They will scrutinize the projects proposed by the management of the Gardens for our financial support. This Sub-Committee will then make recommendations to the Council of the Friends. Having expended $52,500 on projects in the past twelve months, and with several projects now in the pipeline, we need to keep close and careful watch on the projects which we support in the Gardens and Herbarium because, after all when it's all said and done – that's what we're here for!

David Wilkinson
President

Camelia fraterna

MEMBERS' ACTIVITIES

BOTANICAL ILLUSTRATION WORKSHOP

Following the success of our first Botanical Illustration Workshop in March, we are planning a series of six to be held on the second Tuesday of each month from 10.00 am to 4.00 pm running from June to November.

This series will be without the support of Herbarium Artist, Anita Barley, but will be an opportunity for participants to share their expertise and experience with each other.

The cost of the six will be $45.

Because of the limits imposed by the size of the room, we can comfortably accommodate only twenty people. Those attending the first workshop have already been offered this programme, but if you are interested in joining us if places become available, please contact the Friends' office 650 6398 or Louise Coronel 241 5910.

GARDEN EXPERTS

Tuesday 12 June at 7.45 pm at the National Herbarium.

Come and hear the experts speak about other experts in their various fields relating to gardens.

Dr John Foster, Senior Lecturer in the History Department at the University of Melbourne, will outline the history of the nurserymen, Taylor and Sangster.

Mr Tom Garnett, the well known educationalist, journalist and garden lover will speak about the horticulturist, Alister Clark, famous for his roses.

Mr Michael Looker, until recently, Superintendent of the Royal Botanic Gardens, will speak on the Nobelius Nursery created by the Kal Nobelius in the late 19th Century in the Dandenong area.

Supper will be served.

Members: $3.00
Others: $4.00
RSVP: 650 6398

DR JIM WILLIS AND BASKET LUNCH

Tuesday 10 July

The Friends are delighted that our good friend, Dr Jim Willis, former Assistant Government Botanist and Assistant Director of the Royal Botanic Gardens, will speak on "Reflections on Thirty-Four Years at the Herbarium".

Dr Willis is a friend indeed to the Friends – he has accompanied us twice on tours to Mt. Buffalo and to Wilson's Promontory where his botanical awareness and his quiet sense of fun have added greatly to the success of the tours. He will join us again on our Portland Tour at the end of October.

Prior to Dr Willis' talk, Friends will meet together over a basket lunch in Garden House, the home in its beautiful garden setting of Dr David and Mrs Sylvia Churchill.

The lunch will commence at 12.00 noon and at 1.30 pm at the Herbarium Dr Willis will begin his talk. Numbers for the lunch will be limited

Lunch & Lecture:	Members:	$10.00
	Non-members	$13.00
Lecture:	Members:	$ 3.00
	Non-members	$ 4.00
RSVP:	Thursday July 5 on enclosed booking form.	

AUTUMN GARDEN TOUR REUNION

This will be at the home of Murray and Pat Wales, 32 Heyington Place, Toorak on Tuesday 24 July. Further details in separate mailing.

BANKS' FLORILEGIUM

We are privileged and delighted that Dr Christopher J. Humphries, a Taxonomist and Biographer at the British Museum, has agreed to speak to the Friends at the National Herbarium on Wednesday 15 August at 8.00 pm.

Dr Humphries played a major role in the development of the plates for the Bank's Florilegium; we have asked him to speak about that magnificent project and, if appropriate, about another of his projects. We understand that Dr Humphries has addressed public meetings in Europe and the U.S.A. as well as in the United Kingdom.

Supper will be served.

Members:	$5.00
Others:	$7.00
RSVP:	Monday 13 August on enclosed booking form.

NORTH BORNEO TOUR

September 9-27, 1990.

This tour is fully booked. We look forward to hearing from the tour members their reaction to the Friends' first overseas tour!

"ECOLOGY & LANDSCAPE MANAGEMENT"

Mr Steven Forbes, a Botanist Horticulturist, has a M.Phil. in Horticulture and is presently acting as Superintendent of the Royal Botanic Gardens, Melbourne.

The Friends are delighted that Steven will speak to us on the topical subject "Ecology and Landscape Management" with some reference to "The Role of Botanic Gardens".

Wednesday 19 September at 8.00 pm at the National Herbarium, Birdwood Avenue, South Yarra. Supper will be served.

Members:	$3.00
Others:	$4.00
RSVP:	17 September on enclosed booking form.

PLANT SALE

The Growing Friends Plant Sale will be held on Saturday 20 October and Sunday 21 October on the Astronomer's Residence Lawn.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Monday 22 October

Further information in the Spring *Botanic News* and in a separate mailing.

TO PORTLAND WITH DR JIM WILLIS

Friday 26 to Tuesday 30 October.

This very interesting five-day tour to Portland will be accompanied by Dr Jim Willis, famous botanist and member of the Herbarium staff for thirty-four years.

We plan to stop at Warrnambool on our first night then will stay at Portland for three nights and explore from there. Included in the itinerary will be visits to the Ballarat, Warrnambool, Koroit and Portland Botanic Gardens.

Numbers will be limited to thirty people. Cost will be approximately $500 twin share and single supplement an extra $96. Bookings can be confirmed by payment of a deposit of $100 and will be taken in order of receipt – see enclosed booking form. Balance of payment will be required by Monday 10 September.

Enquiries can be made to Lesley Clark on 807 3984 or to the Friends' Office 650 6398.

BLEAK HOUSE & WESTPORT

On Wednesday 14 November we are planning a day tour by bus to visit the famous rose garden at *Bleak House* in Malmsbury, the home of Susan and William Irvine, and Neil Robertson's attractive garden at *Westport*, New Gisborne.

Details in Spring *Botanic News*.

HERONWATER

Sunday 18 November

The Wilkinson's garden will be open under Victoria's Garden Scheme.

CHRISTMAS DINNER

Friday 14 December

GROWING FRIENDS

The Growing Friends are progressing well with preparation for the Plant Sale which this year will be held over two days – Saturday 20 October and Sunday 21 October.

Members of the Friends will find our nursery open on the last Friday of the months of June, July and August – giving an opportunity to buy selected seasonal items.

FRIENDS' SHOP

If you are looking for a gift for a friend overseas or at home, we have quite a large selection of gifts with a botanical flavour and all Australian made.

Should you find it hard to choose a gift for a particular person – what about a gift voucher from our Shop. This is enclosed in a card with J.H. Carse's beautiful painting of an early view of the Botanic Gardens.

A gift idea for children! A jigsaw puzzle from a photograph of various scenes in the Gardens.

We still have a few Banksia prints by Celia Rosser.

Just Arrived

Four Panoramic Scenes in the Gardens.

The hand printed photographs in this Royal Botanic Gardens series are 360° panoramas taken with a Kodak Cirkut camera made in 1915. After restoring this camera to working order, professional photographer, Peter Mappin, refined the panoramic technique to suit his artistic style and purpose. They are available framed or unframed.

There is a 10% discount on purchases of $20.00 and upwards.

ARCHIVES

In order to keep some records of the 'doings' of the Friends, the Council has appointed Philip Ayton to co-ordinate an Archives collection.

We should be pleased to receive any photographs and/or copies of relevant literature which Friends might possess.

For further details please ring the Executive Officer, Margaret MacGregor, on 650 6398.

RECENT ACTIVITIES

Botanic Illustration Workshop 6.3.90 – an outstanding success.

Autumn Garden Tour 23-25.3.90. Warm days, gardens of special interest and the thoughtful hospitality of the Friends of Benalla Botanical Gardens combined to make the Benalla Autumn Garden Tour a great success. The gardens seen over the three day trip all proved to be delightful. It was not only the gardens themselves that made the tour so pleasant, but the chance to talk to the garden owners that provided the added bonus. More than one said that encouragement from garden lovers like the Melbourne Friends made them feel that their efforts were worthwhile.

The opportunity to meet with the Benalla Friends was also a bonus. They hosted pre-dinner drinks for the group in a beautiful garden setting and welcomed the Friends in the Benalla Gardens with morning tea and guided tours. The Melbourne Friends look forward to future contact with them and with other regional groups.

Our tour leader, Golda Isaac, was yet another very important bonus!

Volunteers' Morning Coffee 28.3.90 at Garden House – a happy "get-together".

Kay Fairley & North Borneo 23.4.90 – an interesting morning.

Significant Trees 29.4.90 with John Hawker and morning coffee at Queen's College – this project to be repeated.

Newcomers' Welcome 2.5.90 – a happy gathering.

Birds of the Royal Botanic Gardens 16.5.90 with Helen Aston – a fascinating subject.

MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTIONS

Enclosed with this *Botanic News* is a renewal of subscription notice for the year 1 July 1990 to 30 June 1991. Members will note a small increase in subscription. Council is conscious of the present difficult economic climate and has kept the overall increase in subscription levies to below the inflation rate.

Prompt payment would be very much appreciated.

SPECIAL BENEFITS TO FRIENDS

The following 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

While winter winds whistle through the Gardens taking with them the last of the autumn leaves, several interesting Gardens and Herbarium projects are underway.

The Bamboo Garden is now beginning to take shape, the first major achievement being the completion of the bamboo fence. Gardener, Sabina Glissman-Gloss learned the traditional knotting and tying techniques while working with Ikira Takizawa. Traditional tools were used and the resulting pattern is most attractive. The Friends have very generously contributed $5,000 towards the fence and also the large pots in which the bamboo will be planted.

Josie Vaganiance has recently been on a collecting trip to the New Guinea highlands bringing back orchids, vireya rhododendrons and fern spores, the plants of which were found growing up to 2,000m. These will be propagated and added to both the Nursery and Gardens' collections.

In the Herbarium, Richard Barley is currently working on a project for the Ornamental Plant Collections Association which involves the compilation of a data base of plants listed in early Victorian nursery catalogues. The first listing to be published will cover the period from 1855-1910. Subsequent listings will include 1910 until today. The plants will be listed in alphabetical order (indicating the eras during which the plants were available) and also under different categories such as shrubs, trees and herbaceous plants. This will be an extremely valuable resource for people involved in restoring period gardens.

For those of you who have queries about plant names the second booklet in the Ornamental Plant series, called 'Plant Names', is ready to be published. The booklet has been compiled by Roger Spencer and Peter Lumley and should be available towards the end of the year.

While on publications the third edition of the 'Census of Vascular Plants of Victoria' is now available and can be purchased from either the Visitor Centre or the Gardens Office. The proceedings of the 1988 Botanical History Symposium has also just been published. Called the 'Development of Systematic Botany in Australasia', it includes papers on a variety of topics and can be purchased through either Phillip Short or Don Foreman in the Herbarium.

The long awaited Conservation Analysis is now well underway and the first draft is due in August. Consultants Richard Aitken and Nigel Lewis are working on this with Gardens staff. The analysis will be one source of input for the strategy plan for the Gardens Analysis.

So despite the wintery outlook the Gardens and Herbarium are a hive of activity.

Roslyn Semler
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.'

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