



BOTANIC NEWS

FRIENDS OF THE ROYAL BOTANIC GARDENS, MELBOURNE INC.

WINTER 1995

BIRTHDAY PRESENT TO EXPAND AND ENHANCE THE ROYAL BOTANIC GARDENS

The Royal Botanic Gardens will receive a \$4.7 million birthday present from the Victorian Government to mark its 150th anniversary in 1996.

A sum of \$2.9 million will be used to extend the South Yarra site and create new visitor information facilities and a major entry plaza.

A grant of \$1.83 million will enable an immediate start to be made on creating the Australian Garden and a major wetlands system at Cranbourne. This very special garden will highlight the best of Australian native flora, tracing the influence of Australian plants on our life.

Gardens Gateway Project

Announcing the gift, the Minister for Conservation and Environment, the Hon. Mark Birrell, described the Royal Botanic Gardens in Melbourne as "among the world's finest landscape gardens".

Detailed planning studies have commenced to define the scope of the Gardens Gateway works, prepare design briefs and establish a timetable for the developments. The Gardens Gateway project, to be completed by 1997-98, includes:

- * Expanding the Gardens for about three hectares across Dallas Brooks Drive to include part of the Old Melbourne Observatory site. La Trobe's Cottage will be moved to a more appropriate site, in liaison with the National Trust. The area will be fully landscaped. The new

facilities will include the historic Astronomer's Residence, which will be restored.

- * Creating a new information centre focusing on education and tourism opportunities for visitors.

- * Building an attractive entry precinct.

- * Improving commercial facilities at the Gardens, including a purpose-built retail outlet.

The Minister stressed that an entry fee would not be charged for access to the Gardens Gateway.

Dr Philip Moors, RBG Director, said that the development would allow the Gardens to improve its facilities for the one million-plus overseas tourists, intrastate and interstate visitors who enjoy the Gardens each year.

He said that corporate sponsorship would also be sought for the Gardens Gateway project.

Australian Garden and Wylies Creek

Work will start shortly on the Australian Garden at the Royal Botanic Gardens, Cranbourne, thanks to the \$1.83 million grant. Some of the money will be directed towards completing a new wetland system for Wylies Creek.

Landscape architects Taylor and Cullity Pty Ltd and Paul Thompson are finalising the masterplan that aims to celebrate the best of the country's flora, arts, science and contemporary culture in a 25-hectare Australian Garden.

The Australian Garden will include a major visitor complex with exhibition, education, retail and catering facilities. It will be the first point of contact for most visitors to RBG Cranbourne.

The masterplan includes:

- * recurrent fingers of woodland stretching into the Australian Garden to break the overall site up into framed garden spaces

- * a large dramatic space designed to reflect the spaciousness of Australia's interior through the sculptural use of dryland plants, sands and landforms

- * a series of suspended structures such as boardwalks and platforms which will take visitors through a long valley planted with marsh vegetation

- * water as an essential element within the Australian Garden; a spine of cafes, promenades and interpretation structures will be located along the central waterway, enhanced by gorges and rock pools.

STOP PRESS: The Council of the Friends has agreed to provide a major grant of \$56,054 for the construction of a new Seed House in the RBG Nursery. This magnificent donation will enable the RBG to improve its output of plants and assist the Growing Friends in their important activities. Construction will begin soon. More details in the next *Botanic News*.

FROM THE PRESIDENT

This year 1995 is the 14th anniversary of the beginnings of the Friends, and it is a matter of great pride to look back on what has been achieved in that quite short period, and how much the Friends have been able to contribute to the enhancing and development of our magnificent Gardens.

Since October 1985 we have financed 74 projects in the Gardens, to a total value of over \$350,000. They cover a very wide spectrum but, large or small, they all represent things that were needed to enrich the Gardens; without the support of the Friends they could not have been realised.

I list below the 10 largest donations, so that the great scope of our help can be appreciated:

May 1995	Seed House	\$56,000
June 1988 - June 1992	Computers for Gardens and Herbarium	\$29,700
September 1994	Restoration of Rose Pavilion	\$16,000
March 1993	Planning the Future of the RBG (Planning for projects from Herald-Sun Appeal)	\$15,000
May 1993	Strategy Report on Observatory Site and Gardens House	\$15,000
March/July 1990	Employment of Mycologist at Herbarium	\$13,500
March 1993	Soil Survey of Gardens	\$11,900
February 1988	New Pathway Project	\$11,390
May 1992	Rainforest Misting System	\$11,375
December 1994	Chairs for Herbarium Hall	\$ 8,880

In addition, the Friends are making further donations through the Trust Fund of over \$33,000 towards the production of the four volumes of *Flora of Victoria* and the *Horticultural Flora of South-eastern Australia*.

But financing Gardens projects is only part of the story. Members have given many hundreds of hours of voluntary service, with the Growing Friends, the Friends' Shop, the Activities Committee and the Botanical Illustrators.

The value to the Gardens of all this willing support is beyond calculation; we can take pride in our achievement.

Sir Rupert Hamer
President

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

You will already have read on the front page of *Botanic News* about the Royal Botanic Gardens' two capital grants from the Victorian Government. This is excellent news, and will enable us to make much-needed improvements to visitor facilities in Melbourne and to begin work on the Australian Garden at Cranbourne.

The grants will be allocated over the next three financial years, with \$1.9 million being received in 1995-96. Detailed planning for the two projects is already under way and the first site-works are expected to take place in about six months' time.

Extension of the Gardens across Dallas Brooks Drive and onto the Observatory Site will entail careful handling of the notable heritage and landscape values there in consultation with the Historic Buildings Council, National Trust, City of Melbourne and the Astronomical Society of Victoria. An important aim of the project will be to give a new lease of life to historic buildings on the

Observatory Site and to make the grounds and astronomical features more accessible to visitors.

Work on the design of the Australian Garden at Cranbourne is progressing very well, and more information about this project is included in Philip Moors' report elsewhere in *Botanic News*.

The RBG Board is delighted to have received these two substantial grants. They are a strong vote of confidence in the staff at the RBG and will be a lasting commemoration of our 150th Anniversary in 1996. The Board acknowledges and appreciates the hard work which all staff have put into the rejuvenation of the institution and which has convinced the Government of the value in funding these two projects.

The Friends-RBG Working Group has been meeting regularly since late 1994 to discuss a wide range of issues and common interests. A major goal has been to develop a joint statement of purpose for the two

organisations. This statement has now been prepared, and has been endorsed by both the RBG Board and the Friends' Council. It sets out the support which the Friends aim to provide to the RBG, the types of activities which the Friends will offer their members, and the support which the RBG will offer to the Friends. The Board strongly supports the continuing collaboration of the two organisations for the benefit of the Royal Botanic Gardens.

A Bill making amendments to several sections of the *Royal Botanic Gardens Act 1991* has recently been introduced to Parliament. The amendments extend some commercial services which the RBG can provide, enable 'on-the-spot' fines to be issued for infringing the RBG Regulations, and deal with some omissions from the original Act. In future the RBG will be able to offer professional consultancy services on botany, horticulture, arboriculture etc. to public bodies and to corporations, with Ministerial approval. The RBG will not be able to operate a retail nursery, but the important work of the Growing Friends will be able to continue.

W.R.M. Irvine
Chairman

WINTER ACTIVITIES

NATURE'S EXPERIMENT IN FLOWERING: PROTEACEAE

Illustrated talk by Dr Andrew Douglas
Thursday 29 June at 8.00pm
At the National Herbarium Hall

Andrew is the inaugural Pacific Dunlop Fellow at the Royal Botanic Gardens, and associate of the School of Botany at the University of Melbourne.

Born in New York City and raised in Chicago, in 1994 Andrew was awarded a PhD in Botany by the Louisiana State University for his study of the development and evolution of flower-forms of Proteaceae. He promptly moved to Melbourne.

His current research is involved with asking questions about why flowers are the way they are. The techniques he uses primarily focus on the 'unseen' growth process involved in flower forms.

Supper will be served.

Admission: Friends \$8.00
Others \$10.00

RSVP by 23 June on enclosed booking form.

FILM LUNCHEON AT CINEMA COMO

Only You

Monday 24 July at 11.00am

On two occasions during her childhood, Faith Corvatch, a hopeful romantic, called on mystical powers to name the "one man in the world who was meant for her". Twice the answer was DAMON BRADLEY. When nothing had eventuated from this tantalising prediction, Faith was on the point of entering into a safe marriage when a phone caller with the magical name prompted her to catch the next plane to Italy. Faith's pursuit of the man of her dreams becomes a romantic adventure with surprising twists, but with a predictably happy ending.

Although Marisa Tomei and Robert Downey Jnr play the leading roles, the Italian landscape is the true star of this film. We see glorious scenery from the Venetian pearl of the Adriatic to the rocky cliffs of the Amalfi coast.

After the screening, lunch (sandwiches, cake and tea or coffee) will be served.

Cinema Como is in the new Como complex at the corner of Chapel St and Toorak Rd, South Yarra. It's served by several tram routes, and parking is readily available at Como Carpark (enter from Chapel St or River St off Toorak Rd). Cinema patrons may purchase a parking voucher at the box office for \$1.20.

Cost: \$11.00

RSVP by Tuesday 18 July on enclosed booking form.

THE ORCHIDS OF VICTORIA

*A meeting for all our artist members,
Friends and anyone interested
in native orchids.*

Tuesday 15 August 1995 from 10.00am
At the National Herbarium Hall

Who can resist an orchid? Where do native orchids grow in the wild? Did you know that Victoria has some of the most orchid-rich plant communities in the world?

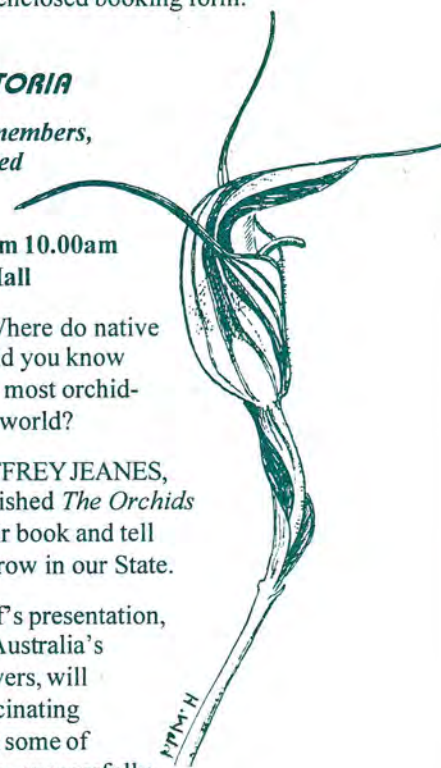
GARY BACKHOUSE and JEFFREY JEANES, co-authors of the newly published *The Orchids of Victoria*, will show us their book and tell us about the orchids which grow in our State.

To complement Gary and Jeff's presentation, HELEN RICHARDS, one of Australia's leading terrestrial orchid growers, will display a selection of her fascinating Victorian orchids and explain some of the secrets of cultivating them successfully.

Our artist members are invited to bring their native orchids paintings for display.

Morning tea and coffee from 10.00am.
Speakers 10.30am - 12.30pm.

Admission: Friends \$5.00 Others \$10.00
RSVP by 8 August on enclosed booking form.



THE CHEMICALS IN PLANTS

Possible new drugs, possible poisons

Illustrated Talk by Dr Claude Culvenor
Wednesday 16 August 1995 at 8.00pm
at the National Herbarium Hall

As a CSIRO scientist, Dr Culvenor spent many years in the study of plant constituents with possible beneficial uses as drugs, and others with harmful effects on animals and humans.

Now retired, he will outline a broader view of chemicals in plants, and discuss the ways in which the search for new drugs is conducted. Dr Culvenor will explain how the rigidity of government controls on access to plant material hinders some aspects of the research effort.

Supper will be served.

Admission: Friends \$ 8.00
 Others \$10.00

RSVP by 11 August on enclosed booking form.

A SEVEN-DAY BUS TOUR IN THE SPRING TO CANBERRA, ALBURY AND BOWRAL

Wednesday 27 September to Tuesday 3 October 1995

Plans are in hand for this trip to take in:

- * The Floriade Festival - a spectacular floral display in our capital city
- * A one-day bus trip to historic Milton Park at Bowral where we shall lunch in the charming diningroom prior to a wander around the fascinating Milton Park garden, of which Professor Michael McCarthy in *Great Gardens* said "...a superbly landscaped hilltop garden, Milton Park was inspired by the English school of landscape design and is arguably the greatest garden in Australia."
- * A further one-day trip to Barbara and David Hamer's property 'Esdale' approximately 40km from Canberra
- * A special dinner in the Members' diningroom at Parliament House - former Senator David Hamer will be our host.

Among other options we are considering for the tour:
 National Gallery guided tour
 National Library
 National Law Courts, where we shall have lunch
 The Australian National Botanic Gardens with a guided tour arranged by its Friends
 A bus trip around Canberra with a tree expert
 The National Film and Sound Archive
 One or two special gardens, and possibly
 Lunch at Regatta Point
 Government House Gardens
 A tour of Parliament House

On the trip up to Canberra we shall lunch with some Friends of Albury Botanic Gardens and perhaps see one special garden, then stay the night of Wednesday 27 September at the Carlton Motel in Albury.

On 28 September we shall hope to arrive in Canberra by lunch time. We plan to leave Canberra and return to Melbourne on Tuesday 3 October.

Cost: Including accommodation, all lunches (apart from first day), dinners, entrance fees - approx \$760. Single accommodation (limited) an extra \$180.

To ensure a place on the tour, please forward a deposit of \$200 by 28 July and the balance by 4 September.

For full details and copy of itinerary please ring AFTER 30 JUNE the Friends' office - 9650 6398. For any further information please ring Eve Brunner - 9818 5954

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY:

More details in Spring newsletter

19 September	John Patrick
4 October	Stephen Ryan
25 October:	Day trip to Toolangi
31 October	Philip Moors
12 November	Day trip to Ballarat
13 November	Annual general meeting

NEW ZEALAND - NORTH ISLAND **4 - 19 NOVEMBER 1995**

This is the perfect time of year to visit New Zealand's North Island and explore it at a leisurely pace. Accompanied by Rosalind Harker of NZ Nature Expeditions Ltd, you will be in expert hands to see the many wonders of this beautiful island. Many private and public gardens will be visited, also the Bay of Islands, and you will experience the natural beauty and culture of this fascinating country. Please telephone the Friends' office for an itinerary.

The cost of \$2,950 includes return airfare, all accommodation, transport and most meals. \$598 for single supplement.

The date for deposit has been extended to 31 August. To ensure a place on the tour please send \$100, with the balance by 29 September.

An autumn tour of the South Island is being planned for 1996 when the weather is at its best.

ASSOCIATION OF FRIENDS OF BOTANIC GARDENS CONFERENCE

The Friends of Benalla Botanical Gardens hosted the third annual Conference of the Association of Friends of Botanic Gardens (Victoria) on 29 and 30 April. About 70 people, representing Friends and others interested in botanic gardens in several places in Victoria, and in Albury and Canberra, attended. Several Melbourne Friends took part. The Benalla Friends are to be congratulated on the most rewarding result of their hard work.

Mr David Ruston of Renmark, the Immediate Past President of the World Federation of Rose Societies, entertained his audience with a wide-ranging talk on roses and rose-growing, illustrated with specimens of roses from his garden.

Dr Philip Moors, Director of our own Gardens, spoke about the customers of botanic gardens in Australia and the fact that visitors to those botanic gardens outnumbered those who visited art galleries and museums. It was necessary, he said, to keep in mind what they expected from botanic gardens and to consider ways to encourage those who were not yet regular visitors. The Hon. Mark Birrell, Minister for Conservation and Environment, spoke about the Government's interest in the maintenance and improvement of the gardens throughout Victoria. He later planted a somewhat rare elm tree (*Ulmus urban*), resistant to disease, in the Benalla Gardens.

Ms Francine Gilfedder, a Landscape Architect who had been involved in the preparation of several conservation studies of historic gardens, spoke about the importance of Conservation Plans for Historic Public Gardens.

Mr Angus Howell, Co-ordinator of the Warrenbayne-Boho Land Protection Group, illustrated his talk about land degradation and the successful work already done

in various parts of Victoria to return rural land to its former productive state. He urged urban dwellers to support this work.

At the Saturday evening dinner Mr Neil Robertson, National Executive Officer of Australia's Open Garden Scheme, gave an inspiring address about the scheme and its importance in introducing newcomers to gardens and then to botanic gardens. On the Sunday morning Mr Max Richards, former City Engineer of the City of Benalla described improvements and future plans for the Benalla Gardens. Mrs Catherine Drew and Mr Alistair Rhook discussed the Brown's Lagoon Therapeutic Garden near Albury, in which they have been involved, both in design and implementation.

The Association's annual general meeting was held during the Conference. Mr John Harper, a member of the Council of the Melbourne Friends, was elected Vice-President and Mr Philip Ayton and Mr Lawrence Cohn, also members of the Council, were re-elected as members of the Association's Committee.



SPECIAL BENEFITS TO FRIENDS

The Gardens' Shop in the Herbarium has introduced a 10% discount for Friends, in recognition of our contribution to the Royal Botanic Gardens.

Remember that Friends are also entitled to a 10% discount on purchases from the Friends' Shop totalling over \$20.

The following businesses very kindly offer special discounts to Friends.

Current membership cards must be shown in order for you to receive these discounts.

Fryers' Nursery

589 Glenferrie Rd, Hawthorn

5% off plants only

Idaho Nurseries

410 Waverley Rd, E. Malvern

10% off plants only

The Gardeners Bulleen Nursery

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

10% off everything

Canterbury Species Garden

7 Byron St, Canterbury

10% off everything

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

RECORD RESULT FOR GROWING FRIENDS' AUTUMN SALE

The Growing Friends raised \$19,000 at their March sale - the best autumn sale result so far.

So many people contributed to the success: the Gardens' staff, who assisted by designing the layout, moving the plants from the nursery to the lawn and providing information to customers at the sale; the chartered accountants firm of LUNDSTROM DICKSON & ASSOCIATES who donated the marquees; and the Activities Committee who added up the totals and collected the money. It is always an enjoyable weekend for those involved.

It is amazing how quickly the empty space in the nursery fills after a major sale. It is already worth a visit on Fridays between 10.00am and 1.00pm. The salvias are still flowering and the tree dahlias are looking lush. The dainty little alonsoas, both apricot and scarlet, have been flowering since spring. There is a choice of artemisias - silver-leaved plants which are excellent contrast for other foliage and flowers, particularly the mauves, pinks and reds.

There are still some of the two gorgeous cannas left from the sale - one has yellow flowers, bright green foliage and is only about one metre high, whilst the other has deep salmon-pink flowers and purplish-bronze leaves. Forsythia 'Beatrix Farren' is looking beautifully healthy and should be a superb mass of yellow flowers in spring. And the final suggestion is Rondeltia anomala (syn. R. striosa), a shrub for semi-shade, which has true red flowers about 1.5cm across, set against strong green leaves. If these do not tempt you, there are many more - come and see.

Mark your diary for the spring plant sale on 14 and 15 October.

AUTUMN ACTIVITIES

Film Luncheon - Country Life - 23 March
 Growing Friends sale - 25 and 26 March
 Fungal Collections at the National Herbarium. Dr Tom May - 29 March
 Cocktail party and Bauer exhibition - 6 April
 Tour to NE Victoria - 7 to 9 April
 Bus trip to Mt Evelyn and Olinda - 27 April
 Nancy Tichborne's Flowers - 2 May
 Plant Names, Ferns and Seaweeds. Dr Roger Spencer, Golda Isaac, Iona Christianson - 16 May
 Newcomers' Welcome - 18 May
 Low Water, not just Less Water, with Australian Plants. Rodger Elliot - 25 May
 Botanical Illustrators - classes and workshops with Jenny Phillips and Anita Barley
 Botanical Embroiderers Workshops

NEWCOMERS' WELCOME

More than 80 new Friends were welcomed on Thursday 18 May at a function in the Herbarium Hall.

Following explanations about the various branches of Friends' activities and an informative talk by RBG Director Dr Philip Moors, the sun shone on cue as the newcomers set off with Guides for walks around the Gardens.

Mindful of the fact that many of our new members are not free to attend Friends' functions during office hours, the Activities sub-committee plans an early-evening newcomers' welcome, with a twilight walk, after daylight saving begins in October.

At our functions, any new members are particularly invited to introduce themselves to committee members, who should be wearing badges.

BOTANICAL EMBROIDERERS' WORKSHOP

These popular classes continue under the direction of Wanda McPherson from the Embroiderers Guild of Victoria.

Held in the Astronomer's Residence on a Monday from 1.00pm until 3.30pm, the next sessions will be on 3 July, 14 August, 11 September, 2 October, 6 November and 4 December.

Cost - \$10 per class. Newcomers welcome. Phone the Friends office if you are interested - 9650 6398

JENNY PHILLIPS' BOTANICAL ART SCHOOL

The next semester of Jenny's classes in botanical painting and drawing will begin on 18 July. Classes are held weekly in Jenny's new studio set up in the Weights and Measures Building on the Observatory site; please telephone Jenny on 9645 9585 for further details.

The work of 'Jenny's Artists' is currently on show at Papillon, 177 Glenferrie Road, Malvern. The exhibition has proved so popular that it has been extended by two weeks until 11 June.

BOTANIC MAGAZINE

A new issue of the Friends' Botanic Magazine is in preparation. If you would like to advertise your business, or could suggest the name of a possible advertiser we could contact, please pass on this information to our office, telephone 9650 6398.

HONOUR FOR BOTANIST

Dr Sophie Ducker, a distinguished Friend of the RBG, is being honoured by the establishment of a post-graduate scholarship at the University of Melbourne. Renowned as a botanist and teacher, she joined the University as a research assistant 51 years ago, and has continued her association there since retiring in 1974.

Contributions to the scholarship fund (which are tax-deductible) may be sent to Professor Pauline Ladiges at the School of Botany, University of Melbourne, Parkville, 3052.

CE GRAND RÊVE

David Wilkinson, Immediate Past President of the Friends, will leave Melbourne on 6 July with his family to soak up some culture in the French countryside - a long-held dream.

They'll occupy a former Cistercian monastery at Bourgneuf, which is north of Bordeaux, and in between Limoges (notable for fine china) and Aubusson (of tapestry fame). It began life as a Roman villa, and retains a Roman crypt, Roman plumbing such as a marble septic tank in working order, and part of a Roman road.

While Edward, Oliver, Artemis and Angus attend the village school in Masbaraud-Mérignat, David will caretake the building and 10ha property with the eye of an architect and landscape designer; his wife Bibi will doubtless find scope for her interior decorating skills. In time, the building will be restored to accommodate paying guests.

The family have all been studying French to prepare for the adventure. The Friends will eagerly await an illustrated account of their experiences following their return to Melbourne in February 1997.

PLANT CRAFT COTTAGE

The Plant Craft Cottage - near H Gate - will be holding its popular FANTASTIC FRIENDS holiday activity for primary school-aged children (in the care of an adult) from Monday 10 July to Friday 14 July between 10.30am and 2.30pm.

A weekend workshop on Shibori techniques and dyeing with indigo will be held on 7 and 8 October. Contact Marilyn Fincher on 9571 7385 for details.

Always an interesting place to visit, with its delightful garden and displays of plant crafts, this historic cottage is open to the public between 10.00am and 3.00pm on weekdays. On Tuesdays you can watch members demonstrate the use of plant fibres in such crafts as basketry, papermaking and dyeing.



The book launch and talk by Nancy Tichborne was a delightful and profitable function for the Friends. Lothian generously donated \$114, a percentage of sales on the day.

FREE GUIDED WALKS

Come and explore the delights of the Gardens with a Voluntary Guide.

Guided Walks leave from the Gardens' Shop (Herbarium Building, corner Birdwood Avenue and Dallas Brooks Drive) at 11.00am and at 1.00pm Tuesday to Friday and Sunday.

Groups of six or more should give one weeks' notice. Phone (03) 9655 2341.

Walks at other times or with particular themes can also be arranged by phoning the same number.

ABORIGINAL RESOURCES WALK

**Tuesday 11, Thursday 13 and Sunday 16 July
Tuesday 15 and Thursday 17 August
Starting from D Gate at 11.00am**

Don't miss out on this fascinating walk looking at the plants that were used for food, construction, medicines and implements by Australian Aborigines.

Bookings required.
Phone (03) 9655 2341 or enquire at the Gardens' shop.

HORTICULTURAL FLORA OF SOUTH-EASTERN AUSTRALIA

The first volume of this major work, edited by Dr Roger Spencer, will be published in September.

A significant pre-publication discount will be available to Friends. See booking form.



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

Patron:
His Excellency the
Hon. Richard E. McGarvie
President of the Council
of the Friends:
Sir Rupert Hamer
Vice Presidents:
Eve Brunner,
Durham Smith
Secretary:
Lawrence Cohn
Treasurer:
David Baumgartner
Editor:
Heather Ironmonger

FRIENDS OFFICE
Margaret Howes
Joan Baumgartner
Helen Fahey
C/- National Herbarium
Birdwood Avenue
South Yarra Vic 3141
Tel: (03) 9650 6398
Fax: (03) 9650 7723

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FROM THE GARDENS AND HERBARIUM

Landscape architects Taylor and Cullity Pty Ltd and Paul Thompson are finalising the design for the new Australian Garden, which will occupy 25 hectares in the north-western section of RBG Cranbourne. Their imaginative design explores the theme of 'The nature of Australia' and the influence of plants on our life and culture.

The large dramatic space is being designed to reflect the spaciousness of Australia's landscapes through the sculptural use of plants, landforms and water. Recurrent fingers of woodland will break the site up into framed garden spaces, each offering an artistic interpretation of the Australian flora's influence on our culture and environment. The garden will include a visitor centre with exhibition, education, retail and catering facilities. The recently announced grant of \$1.83 million by the Victorian Government to Cranbourne will enable creation of the Australian Garden to begin later this year.

The last of the divisional reviews has now been completed at the RBG. A new structure has been developed for the Public Programs & Development Division, with the establishment of four branches (Fundraising, Visitor Programs, Business Development, Marketing). Positions in the new structure were advertised within the RBG in March. Some vacancies have subsequently been advertised externally. Appointments to the new positions and operation of the new branches will begin in June.

Two very successful events have been held at RBG Melbourne recently. An exhibition of 30 remarkable botanical illustrations by Ferdinand Bauer was held in the Herbarium Hall during April and early

May. A steady stream of visitors appreciated the plates selected from Bauer's Australian works produced after his voyage on HMS Investigator with Robert Brown and Matthew Flinders between 1801 and 1805. One of the plates in the exhibition illustrated *Dryandra formosa* from King George Sound in WA - and we discovered a beautifully preserved specimen of this species in the National Herbarium collected by Brown from the same location, presumably when he was there with Bauer!

Mothers Day 1995 was celebrated at the Gardens with a free afternoon concert on the Western Lawn by the Victorian Concert Orchestra. The event was sponsored by the Rotary Club of Melbourne as Rotary's gift to Mothers Day. A large and appreciative audience enjoyed the music, lazed on the lawns, absorbed the autumn atmosphere and colours of the Gardens, and devoured Devonshire scones and tea.

The education service at RBG Melbourne continues to attract large numbers of students - this year's bookings are running 25 per cent ahead of those for the same time in 1994. Now the innovative programs, the enthusiastic teaching staff led by Rod Dunstan and the essential assistance provided by RBG horticultural staff have all been rewarded - the Directorate of School Education has decided to allocate a second teacher to the RBG, commencing later in Term 2. This will give a further boost to our educational activities. The strong support which the RBG is receiving from DSE is appreciated and has greatly assisted our development of these services.

Philip Moors
Director, RBG