Botanic News

FRIENDS OF THE ROYAL BOTANIC GARDENS, MELBOURNE INC.

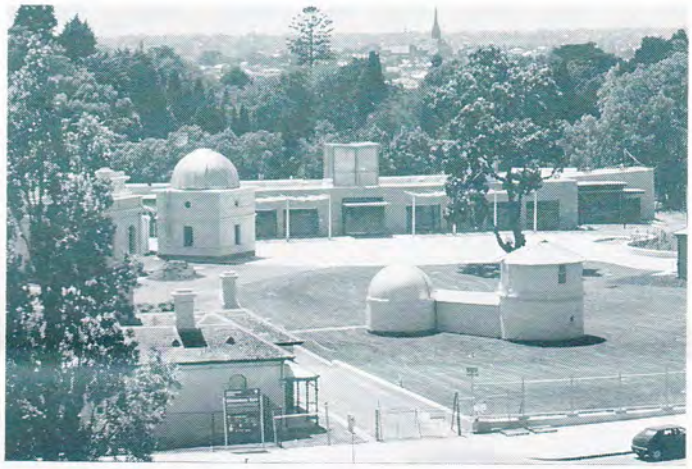
A12827T

WINTER 1999

YOUR CHANCE TO SEE THE WOLLEMI PINE

The Wollemi Pine was thought to be extinct for at least 90 million years but was discovered in the wild only five years ago in the Blue Mountains of NSW. It is a native Australian survivor of the ice ages and there are only 38 adult trees in the wild.

From Monday 31 May to Friday morning 4 June ONLY, a Wollemi Pine will be displayed in the Visitor Centre between 9.00am and 5.00pm, and another will be at Mueller Hall for early evening interactive slide presentations. Phone 9252 2300 for details.



The old Observatory buildings (above); the new Cafe, Visitor Centre and Gardens Shop fronting Pacific Dunlop Plaza (left). *Helen Fahey photo*

The Hon. Marie Tehan greets three Honorary Life Members of the Friends, (from left), Beth Higgs, Golda Isaac and Robyn Tymms.

Margaret Howes and Janet Thomson at the opening. *David Plant photo*

An admiring Dame Elisabeth Murdoch with Irene Creedon, who devoted eight months at the Victorian Tapestry Workshop to weaving the Arthur Boyd tapestry. A gift from Tattersalls for RBG's 150th anniversary, Shoalhaven Saplings *adorns the new Visitor Centre, and is a fitting tribute to the late artist.*
David Plant photo

FROM THE PRESIDENT

One of the valuable but not always adequately recognised features of our Australian community is the extent of the giving of voluntary service. Rotary, Lions, Apex, Boy Scouts, Lifeline, CFA and surf lifesavers are among many organisations so familiar to us that we tend to accept them as a normal part of life. How fortunate Australia is to possess this spirit of voluntary service.

The many associations of Friends, whether of public gardens, art galleries, zoos, museums and so on - our own Friends of the Royal Botanic Gardens not the least of them - are outstanding examples of this spirit.

What brought this especially to mind was learning the results both of our Growing Friends' Sale from their nursery and those of the Friends' Shop in the Gardens. Takings from the Growing Friends' Autumn sale amounted to more than $25,000, while the Friends' Shop's takings for this financial year to date have exceeded $360,000. Each of these has involved voluntary work by so many of our Members. The Growing Friends give at least 80 hours a week, week in and week out, of voluntary service in their nursery, working in close harmony with the Gardens' staff. The Shop depends on the devoted service, year round, of some 40 volunteers from among the Friends.

These and many other voluntary activities of the Friends - some of them producing funds, others supplying valuable services to the Gardens and to those who use and enjoy them - are testimony to the community value of the Friends of the Royal Botanic Gardens. Recently we enjoyed one more manifestation of the worthwhile use of funds raised by the Friends. Terry Smyth, who is in charge of the Gardens' Southern Chinese Collection and herself a member of the Friends, gave a fascinating description to a capacity audience in the Mueller Hall of her four months spent in Yunnan Province, China, at the invitation of the Kunming Institute of Botany. She has brought back from Yunnan plants for propagation in the Gardens and a great new store of specialised knowledge. Terry's time in China was made possible by the Friends' funding of her temporary replacement at the Gardens.

This year the Gardens has gained still more Friends with 125 new Members between February and May. The more Members we have the more we can do for the Gardens and the more worthwhile activities we can offer to Members, so see if you can recruit a new Friend in 1999!

Ninian Stephen

CAMELLIAS

Camellias provide bountiful blooms in the Gardens during June, July and August - a display highlighted on our masthead with a drawing by Anita Barley.

The Friends will have a camellia-focused talk and walk on 12 August (see p.4)

OBSERVATORY GATE

It is wonderful to see the first stage of Observatory Gate opened to the public. Around 200 invited guests attended the opening by the Minister for Conservation and Environment, The Hon Marie Tehan MLA, on 10 March. There was extensive media coverage for the opening and also for the launch of the Melbourne Food and Wine Festival, by the Premier on the following day, which was held at Observatory Café. Patronage of the Gardens Shop and Observatory Café has been exceptionally good.

Repair work to the Great Melbourne Telescope Building has been completed using funds received in a specific grant from Heritage Victoria. Parts of the GMT building have now been re-occupied by the Botanical Illustrators and the Astronomical Society of Victoria.

Improvements to the car park, for maximum usage, are currently under way. Car parking must be restricted as there are many more permit holders than available spaces. This means that 'casual' parking will no longer be permitted. Parking is not permitted on the entrance road from Birdwood Avenue nor in the area behind the Observatory.

Philip Moors

WINSTON CHURCHILL FELLOWSHIP

I will be travelling to the UK, France, Switzerland and Italy in June and July, sponsored by a Churchill Fellowship. I will be visiting public and private gardens, particularly those which have reached stages of maturity, and where management strategies to address horticultural sustainability have been introduced. I will also investigate general horticultural maintenance and management practices, environmental approaches, resourcing and structural issues, and so forth.

The trip will include visits to RBG Kew, RBG Edinburgh (and its various annexes), RHS Garden Wisley, the garden of Heligan, the new National Botanic Gardens of Wales site, Oxford and Cambridge University botanic gardens, Great Dixter and Sissinghurst, the Hillier Arboretum, and the Royal Parks of London (to name a few). European destinations will include Vaux le Vicomte, the Bagatelle Garden, Monet's garden at Giverny, the botanic gardens of Basel, Lausanne and Geneva, and of course the world's oldest botanic gardens at Padua and Pisa.

I will be accompanied by my wife Anita (bound to find inspiration for her botanical art) and daughter Georgina.

Stephen Paterson, and then Sabine Glissmann-Gough, will act as Director of Melbourne Gardens Division during my absence.

Richard Barley

WINTER ACTIVITIES

NOTTING HILL

FILM LUNCHEON: Thursday 17 June at 11.00am
FILM AND CHAMPAGNE SUPPER:
Friday 18 June at 8.45pm
Trak Cinema, 445 Toorak Rd, Toorak

Will Julia Roberts, star of *My Best Friend's Wedding,* and Hugh Grant, the engaging almost-bridegroom of *Four Weddings and a Funeral*, face another wedding in *Notting Hill?* Anna (Julia Roberts), a famous film actress, is working on location in Notting Hill, London. Will (Hugh Grant) owns a quiet bookstore in Notting Hill. Anna walks into Will's bookstore, and this romantic comedy takes off from there.

Be one of the first to see this eagerly-anticipated film, whose season begins on 15 June. We have made group bookings for two sessions, to suit our regular film audience as well as young Friends and others working during the day.

Cost: Luncheon (sandwiches, cake, tea/coffee) $12.00
Supper (champagne and sandwiches) $13.50

Parking in Tintern Avenue or Safeway car park.
RSVP by Wednesday 9 June on enclosed booking form

THE GARDEN PLANTS OF CHINA

Illustrated talk by Peter Valder
Friday 18 June at 10.00am for 10.30am
Mueller Hall, National Herbarium

Terry Smyth has given us a tantalising taste of horticulture in China; now we're to have a more comprehensive picture from Peter Valder, whose book Terry will launch here on 17 June.

Peter has drawn upon his extensive botanical and horticultural experience to produce *The Garden Plants of China*, a handsome 400-page volume with 420 colour illustrations, published by Florilegium. Acclaimed for his book *Wisterias*, Peter has travelled in China over a 20-year period. He is well-recognised for his television and radio appearances and as a writer; Peter's career at the University of Sydney is less well-known here.

Many of our most popular ornamental plants such as peonies, azaleas, camellias, magnolias, repeat-flowering roses, lilacs and crabapples have come from China. Peter's book discusses more than 400 plants grown in Chinese gardens, and describes the role of plants in Chinese art, history, literature and symbolism.

Coffee will be served before the talk.
Cost: Friends $10 Others $12
RSVP by Tuesday 15 June on enclosed booking form

THEATRE NIGHT: *THE MERRY WIDOW*

Monday 5 July at 6.30pm
State Theatre, Victorian Arts Centre

Marina Prior, John O'May, Simon Gallaher and Max Gillies head a company of over 100, with full ballet and chorus, for this lavish new production of *The Merry Widow.* The State Orchestra of Victoria will combine with the singers to present the lilting, romantic melodies of Franz Lehar.

We have a group booking that, at $60 per ticket A Reserve, offers a discount on normal prices. We must confirm our booking with the theatre on Monday 7 June. If you wish to waltz with *The Merry Widow,* please telephone the Friends' office on 9650 6398 asap **and no later than Friday 4 June**, in advance of posting your booking form.

INSECTS IN YOUR GARDEN

Illustrated talk by Ian Endersby
Thursday 15 July at 5.30pm for 6.00pm
Mueller Hall, National Herbarium

Illustration: Large White Garden Butterfly. Chambers Encyclopaedia

No, we will not be hearing about pest eradication. Instead, Ian Endersby invites you to visit the fascinating world that the close-up camera lens can reveal. You will see bizarre shapes and beautiful colours; hear unusual stories of how insects go about their daily lives; see how they interact with each other and their environment. There are stories of deceit and exploitation, all with the motivation to ensure their offspring have the best advantages. And this all happens under your very eyes, in your own garden.

Ian has spent many years studying and photographing all aspects of natural history. He is an active member of a number of entomological, bird and field naturalist clubs (he is Honorary Secretary of the Royal Society of Victoria), with a long list of speaking engagements. One of his major interests is insect behaviour and ecology, but he is adamant that insects can't be studied in isolation from the rest of the natural world.

Refreshments will be served before the talk.
Cost: Friends $8 Others $12

Because the subject will be of special interest to students, we have set a special $5 student fee for this occasion, and look forward to seeing many young people at this talk.

RSVP by Monday 12 July on enclosed booking form

NEW CENTURY, NEW MUSEUMS, NEW FRIENDS

The 10th World Congress of Friends of Museums will be held in Sydney from 13 -17 September. Friends of the RBG is affiliated with this organisation. We have programs for the conference sessions, social events and tours in our office. Please telephone 9650 6398 if you'd like to receive a copy.

BIRRARUNG - RIVER OF MISTS

Illustrated talk by Dr David Beardsell
Thursday 29 July at 5.30pm for 6.00pm
Mueller Hall, National Herbarium

David Beardsell, who works at the Department of Natural Resources and Environment, gave an enthralling talk to the Friends in October 1997, describing the plants and animals existing before European settlement along the Yarra from Hawthorn to Hobsons Bay. We made a mental note to invite him again after the completion of his work in progress - a natural history of the Yarra in its entirety. Dr Philip Moors will launch the book at the Royal Society of Victoria on 30 July.

The book encompasses the land surface, plants, insects, frogs, birds and other wildlife associated with the Yarra as well as the river itself, and changes that have occurred over the years.

Refreshments will be served before the talk.
Cost: Friends $8 Others $12
RSVP by Monday 26 July on enclosed booking form

THE NEW ROSE GARDEN

Illustrated talk by Andrew Laidlaw and Matt Howard
Wednesday 4 August at 10.00am for 10.30am
In the Mess Room, Nursery Yard

As he did when the Perennial bed was re-designed, RBG Landscape Planner Andrew Laidlaw will explain to Friends forthcoming changes to the Rose collection. The RBG Master Plan recommended that the Species roses be moved to a sunnier, larger and more prominent position; the chosen site is near B Gate, in a triangular section of lawn where marigolds were grown during summer to prepare the soil.

Some existing plants will be moved, and will be supplemented by other hard-to-find varieties. Heritage roses such as Bourbons, Portlands and Damasks will be added.

Andrew and Matt Howard, curator of the Rose species collection, have worked together on the design and proposed implementation of the new garden, which is to be completed by the end of Spring. Well-known rosarian Ian Huxley is assisting them.

The presentation will include slides and plans which will show the entire process from its inception. It will also include a walk to the site and a look at the works to date.

Enter at E Gate and turn left to Nursery Yard.

Morning tea and coffee will be served.
Cost: $6
RSVP by Monday 2 August on enclosed booking form.

CAMELLIAS

Talk by Dr Bob Withers, illustrated with slides and flower specimens
Thursday 12 August at 10.00am for 10.30am
Mueller Hall, National Herbarium

Dr Withers will talk about the camellias that grow in the Royal Botanic Gardens, and the culture of camellias in the home garden.

He is a notable authority, being a Fellow of the Australian Camellia Research Society, and a breeder of camellias. He was awarded an OAM for services to horticulture, a Veitch Gold Medal from the Royal Horticultural Society in London, and a John Pascoe Fawkner Gold Medal from the Royal Horticultural Society of Victoria.

Dr Withers has identified Guilfoyle's 100-year-old plantings and established the RBG camellias as a Reference Collection for the OPCA. He has introduced several hundred camellias into the Gardens over the last two years, and has another 50 ready to plant. **After Dr Withers' talk, we'll be led on a walk around the RBG camellia beds.**

Refreshments will be served in Mueller Hall from 10 o'clock, preceding the talk.

Cost: Friends $8 Others $12
RSVP by Monday 9 August on enclosed booking form.

ITALIAN GARDENS

Illustrated talk by Caroline Davies
Wednesday 25 August at 5.30pm for 6.00pm
Mueller Hall, National Herbarium

Caroline Davies is a passionate gardener with a background in writing and editing. With partner David Martin she runs garden and special interest tours ranging from day visits to private gardens in areas accessible to Melbourne to extended tours in country areas. Other trips go further afield to interstate, New Zealand and Europe.

Caroline's book *The Eternal Garden* reveals how civilisations in different parts of the world have been reflected in their gardens; her tours of Mediterranean gardens include sites of antiquity in Greece and Italy.

Refreshments will be served before the talk.

Cost: Friends $8 Others $12
RSVP by Monday 23 August on enclosed booking form.

THE GALAPAGOS OF ANTARCTICA

Dr Philip Moors will lead a voyage to the Subantarctic Islands of Australia and New Zealand for Heritage Expeditions (NZ) Ltd in November. With a focus on the flora and fauna of this remote wilderness area, the tour is being promoted particularly among Friends of Botanic Gardens around Australia.

Telephone the Friends' office if you'd like a brochure.

BOTANICAL ILLUSTRATORS

THINK CAREFULLY BEFORE YOU FRAME
Talk by Wendy Maguire
Tuesday 24 August at 10.00am for 10.30am
Mueller Hall, National Herbarium

Framing is the final detail an artist will add to his/her work of art. Aesthetically critical to the finished composition, the choice of framing materials will also determine its longevity.

The use of archival framing materials should be an essential element in the presentation of art for exhibition and sale. However, many artists are unaware of, or are confused by, the diversity of materials and techniques available at their framers.

Wendy Maguire is a professional framer with particular experience in framing fine watercolour drawings. She will show you examples of the many different framing materials available and help you to understand the effect they can have on the quality and presentation of your finished art work.

10.00am morning coffee on arrival
10.30am Wendy Maguire

Cost $5
RSVP by Friday 20 August on enclosed booking form

ART BOTANICAL

About 12 of our Botanical Illustrators are participating in an exhibition at Art Affairs Gallery, 42 University Street, Carlton. It will be opened by Prof. Pauline Ladiges, Head of the School of Botany at the University of Melbourne, on 2 June at 6.00pm, and may be viewed daily (except Tuesdays) between noon and 6.00pm until 23 June.

DIANNE EMERY'S CLASSES

Second semester classes will commence as follows:

Tuesday 20 July: Evening class
Wednesday 21 July: Morning and afternoon classes
Friday 23 July: Class for more experienced artists

Please telephone Dianne on 9523 5397 for information.

Romantic Friends

The Friends will offer a year's free membership to each couple marrying in the Royal Botanic Gardens. More than a hundred weddings take place in the Gardens in a year, and we hope that this romantic association will encourage them to become lasting Friends.

GROWING FRIENDS

The Autumn Sale was a great success. Once again, hard work was rewarded with the very pleasing result of over $25,000. The large stock of plants, many of them flowering, looked wonderful. Customers queued early to ensure the purchase of their choice. As usual, RBG horticulturists were generous with their time, help and advice. Their support is much valued and appreciated. Sarah Guests's newspaper article about succulents the week before the sale stimulated interest and purchasing zeal for this fascinating group of plants; one customer bought a trolley-load of them. The inclement weather and parking difficulties (due to street closure and a Bicycle Victoria event) on the Sunday tested everyone's resolve, but the customers just kept coming! Thanks to one and all.

We have welcomed several new members to the group over recent weeks and have already produced new stocks of plants ready for sale; there are several species of *Helleborus*, the stunning *Doryanthes palmeri* (Spear Lily), fragrant winter-flowering *Sarcococca* and many others. Friends are welcome to visit and purchase plants on Fridays between 10.00am and 1.00pm. Friends are also reminded that we will do our best to satisfy special requests to produce particular plants from the RBG that they would like to purchase.

Computer help required

The millenium is coming and the Friends plan to greet the new century with the appropriate technology.

To do this we are going to need some help. We will need assistance in designing an exciting web page for the Friends as we plan to have an internet connection in this not-too-distant future. Also we would appreciate help in using our current Access data base to provide plasticised membership cards.

If you, or your children, or nieces or nephews, are able to assist we would love to hear from you. Please ring the office on 9650 6398.

Young Friends

A small, enthusiastic group met in May to discuss the sort of activities that would have particular appeal for younger Friends. These included: hands-on gardening, twilight walks, daytime walks for Members with young children, social events including functions with celebrities and discount cinema (see Film and Supper item on p.3 - very good value for $13.50).

We'd love to have more ideas and to hear from people interested in activities for this group. You could phone a 'young Friend', Clara Mandaletti, direct on 9885 0035, or Janet James on 9849 0164.

NOTES FROM GATE LODGE

We are gradually settling into our new home and have started to acquire the furniture which we need. In the photocopy room we now have a wall covered in inexpensive shelving which makes for efficient storage of papers, envelopes and other stationery. With the help of Battens, we have acquired excellent second-hand bookcases and desks, so are able to organise our offices with a feeling of permanence. At the time of writing there are still quite a few defects, and we will all be particularly pleased when the heating, the front door knob and the blocked sink are fixed.

The Volunteer Receptionists attend with great regularity. Their help with phone-answering and office tasks is much appreciated. There are still some places on the roster if anyone has a spare half-day

Recently we functioned as a first aid station for a bus passenger who fell on the Shrine steps and gashed her leg!

As we are now having a direct mail delivery, correspondence should be addressed to the Friends of RBG, Gate Lodge, Birdwood Avenue, South Yarra, 3141.

Our thanks to Prue Myer who kindly gave us a vacuum cleaner and to Julie Maddock who recommended our new cleaner; he is doing an excellent job.

Now that we have our own home we would really appreciate the assistance of a **Handy Person** who could do small maintenance jobs around our cottage and carry out minor repairs on our memorial seats. If you are such a person and would like to donate your time to the Friends, please contact the office.

Members will not be surprised to learn that it is time for a small increase in subscriptions - the first since 1996. At its April meeting Council agreed with the Finance sub-committee that membership subscriptions would be increased as follows:

Household [formerly Family] consisting of two adults at the same address and children under 18	$43
Ordinary Member, within 50 km of the GPO	$30
Country, Interstate, Overseas, Pensioner and Student Member	$22

We have tried to keep our membership dues as low as is possible while needing to cover increased costs of running the organisation. Our thanks are due to the several volunteers who give their time to process the membership and so minimise administrative expenses.

Also, we are in the process of changing over to plasticised Membership cards. We still have some of the card ones to finish whilst we organise the plasticised ones but some time, probably in July, Members will start to receive the new card. Included in this changeover, of course, will be new cards for Life Members and Honorary Life Members.

Margaret Howes
Executive Officer

FRIENDS' SHOP

A large number of Bell Miners have moved into our corner of the Gardens - our latest most-asked question is "What bird is that?" Being small, quick and a soft grey-green, they are extremely difficult to spot, so we often have 10-20 people standing outside peering up into the eucalypts trying to see them. As a result, we are selling a lot of bird books. A few suggestions to get you started on my absolutely favourite pastime:

Field Guide to Australian Birds (Slater) $29.95
Field Guide to the Birds of Australia (Simpson & Day) $35.00
Field Guide to the Birds of Australia (Pizzey) $39.95
Green Guide: Parrots of Australia (Lindsay) $14.95
Green Guide: Birds of Australia (Rowland) $14.95
Flight of the Shearwater (Serventy) $19.95
Birdwatching in Australia & NZ (Simpson & Wilson) $29.95

Lots of new Australian-design stationery. If you're going overseas, it makes a great lightweight gift.

From Lois Brunt, our Botanical Illustrator: hand painted shoe bags with delicate Australian floral designs, giftwrapped. $12.00 each

We've had a wonderful Summer and Autumn. It's been busy and happy - we look forward to seeing you in here when you are next in the Gardens.

Jill Swann, Shop Manager

LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

We're sure that, within our organisation of Friends, there's a wealth of skills, talents and experience, but they're hidden from us. We may have occasion to seek to tap into them. As we approach the year 2000, we'd like to record the names of Members who may be available for consultation from time to time. We're thinking, for instance, of people experienced in public relations, the corporate world, finance and the law.

Please drop us a line, or telephone the office on 9650 6398 if you think you may be able to help.

Helen Johns

Helen Johns, BA, Dip Ed, an early member of the Friends, died on 16 April at the age of 82. Helen is remembered with respect and affection by many. She was a teacher at St Catherine's and later, librarian with a firm of architects.

Helen was an enthusiastic member of the splendid team of volunteers in the seminal years of the Friends' Shop. We have been advised that the Friends are to receive a legacy from her will.

DAME ELISABETH MURDOCH
Patron of the Royal Botanic Gardens

The RBG Board held a dinner on 22 March to honour Dame Elisabeth Murdoch's contributions to the Gardens, and to mark her 90th birthday. An exquisite watercolour by Dianne Emery of a single climbing rose, *Francis E. Lester,* was presented to Dame Elisabeth.

Also, she was given a dried specimen, as token, of a newly-discovered species named for her as *Boronia Elisabethiae*. Awaiting formal description and endemic to Tasmania, it was found by the Herbarium's Dr Marco Duretto in the course of his work for *Flora of Australia.*

DR SOPHIE DUCKER

Another 90th birthday party in May honoured a Friend, the noted botanist Dr Sophie Ducker. Although a private affair, its success owed much to the Friends' catering group, Geoff Hardy (looking after drinks), Robyn Tymms's flowers, and Gardens staff who decorated the Mueller Hall stage.

To mark the occasion, Dr Ducker presented *The Flora Graeca Story*, which documents the works of John Sibthorb and Ferdinand Bauer, to Dr Philip Moors for the RBG Library.

In lieu of gifts, guests were asked to bring something for the Brotherhood of St Laurence. This raised approximately $2000 in cash and kind.

CURATORS' FORUM

A very successful Australian Botanic Gardens and Zoo Horticulturists Forum was held at RBG Melbourne during April. The three-day program included presentations from a range of professional experts, both from botanic gardens and other related fields. A marvellous dinner was held at the Observatory Cafe, and a 'Night Sky Tour' was provided, with assistance from the Astronomical Society of Victoria. Field trips to various features within the Melbourne site and to RBG Cranbourne were very popular.

WELL-MET AT WARRNAMBOOL

Support for botanical gardens, large or small, ancient or newly-fledged, provides a strong unifying interest among participants at conferences of the Association of Friends of Botanic Gardens of Victoria. The April meeting at Warrnambool attracted about 130 people, including 11 Melbourne Friends, a contingent from RBG Adelaide and the Friends' President from the Australian National Botanic Gardens in Canberra.

John Hawker, Horticulturist at Heritage Victoria and a Councillor of the Melbourne Friends, in his keynote address, emphasised the need for Gardens to form partnerships with other local institutions. This would ensure they were viewed as part of an overall cultural experience, because Gardens were important for tourism and the economy of a city or town. John urged the Friends to harness the skills of individuals and other organisations who could make important contributions to the development of botanic gardens. He noted the value of the Internet for both Gardens and Friends, described as 'urgent' the need for all plantings to be mapped and records maintained, and urged initiatives be undertaken to develop the education, research and conservation role of botanic gardens.

Other subjects discussed in the very well-organised program included Changes in Seasonal Patterns; Western District Gardens; Australian Plants and Fire; Marketing Cut Flowers, and the Mahogany Ship.

But it wasn't all talk! Visits were made to botanic gardens at Warrnambool, Koroit and Port Fairy and to Tower Hill, Victoria's first national park, where the high number of dead and damaged trees bears witness to the over-population of Koalas.

The Friends of the Albury Botanic Gardens will host the next conference in April 2000. Plan to be there!

FRIENDS' BENEFITS

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

The following businesses kindly offer discounts to Friends on presentation of their signed current membership cards, which 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 Vic Schools Nursery
585 Waverley Rd, Glen Wav.
20% 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
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. 10% discount, also 8 punnets for $20
Banksia Hill B&B
RMB 5349, Horsham, 3401
10% discount on accommodation
The Garden Walk
199 New St, Brighton
10% discount off plants only

NB. As Wolf tools are now concentrating on wholesale business, they are no longer able to offer a benefit to Friends.

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. Sir James Gobbo, A.C.

President:
The Rt Hon. Sir Ninian Stephen

Vice Presidents:
Louise Coronel
Heather Ironmonger

Secretary:
Lawrence Cohn

Treasurer:
David Baumgartner

Editor:
Heather Ironmonger

FRIENDS' OFFICE
Margaret Howes
Helen Fahey
Jean Woodger

Gate Lodge
Birdwood Avenue
South Yarra Vic 3141
Tel: (03) 9650 6398
Fax: (03) 9650 7723

Print Post Approved
PP 3458420025
ISSN No. 08170-650

Printer:
Gill Miller Press Pty Ltd
110 Franklin Street
Melbourne Vic. 3000

Printed on
100 per cent recycled paper
Australian made.

FROM THE GARDENS AND HERBARIUM

Since 1981, RBG Melbourne has been host to a colony of Grey-headed Flying Foxes. Initially the population was generally less than 1000 at its peak each year. In 1994 the population started to rise dramatically, and has continued to do so, reaching around 8000 in March this year. At present there are about 5000 in the Gardens.

The Flying Fox colony is continuing to cause serious damage to the historic and significant vegetation of the Gardens. Several trees have now died, and most of the trees and palms in the Fern Gully area show damage. The colony has spread, and now occupies approximately 25 per cent of the total area of the Gardens.

Following commissioning of a management report, staff trialled several dispersal strategies in 1997 and 1998, with only limited and temporary success. Assistance has been sought, over several years, from Department of Natural Resources and Environment fauna management officers and national flying fox experts about control methods. We are continuing to work closely with DNRE officers in an attempt to find a solution to the problem.

Unfortunately, our capital bid to the Government for the Australian Garden at RBG Cranbourne did not receive funding in the recent State budget. However, we remain optimistic about the project and will continue to solicit funding from both Government and non-government sources to build this Garden.

The RBG Library Manager, Ms Helen Cohn, has commenced work on the history of the National Herbarium, which is Victoria's oldest scientific institution. Ms Cohn carried out some historical research at RBG Kew while on leave in the UK in April. The book should be published in 2003, the Herbarium's 150th anniversary.

Dean Stewart is continuing to make excellent progress in establishing the Aboriginal Heritage Walk, helped by funding from The Danks Trust and the Friends. The whole project is recognised as an excellent example of the way in which Koori heritage can be made known to the broader community.

Ms Catherine Brown has recently taken up her appointment as RBG Development Manager in the Public Programs and Development Division. She has spent the past six years in the fundraising section of the Anti-Cancer Council, and has extensive experience in fundraising involving business, philanthropic trusts and individuals.

Dr Teresa Lebel has joined the Plant Science and Biodiversity Division as a Senior Botanist. She has recently returned to Australia after completing her PhD in the United States. Her particular research expertise is with subterranean macro-fungi – the 'truffles' – which are a diverse and little-known group in Australia. Her collaboration with Dr Tom May should expand RBG Melbourne's standing as a national centre for mycological research.

Ms Jenny Hoysted, Visitor Programs Manager, has accepted a senior educational appointment at the new Melbourne Aquarium. She will leave the RBG to take up this position on 11 June. Educational and visitor programs at the RBG have expanded most impressively under Jenny's guidance, and we wish her continuing success.

I have accepted an invitation to visit the International Horticultural Exposition and the Kunming Botanical Garden,China, in July.

Philip Moors
Director