

Autumn 2011

BOTANIC NEWS

FRIENDS *of the* ROYAL BOTANIC
GARDENS MELBOURNE INC.

HISTORIC BUILDINGS IN THE RBG

page 5

AUTUMN PLANT SALE

Saturday 30 April and Sunday 1 May

FROM THE PRESIDENT

Autumn has just arrived, and we look forward to some relief ahead from the Summer heat. I hope you all survived the stresses of Summer and managed to find a cool spot to rest and relax in over the holidays. Due to the good Summer rains and my absence for five weeks, my home garden decided to behave like an Amazon jungle, and I am looking forward to the coming cooler weather to regain control. Our Growing Friends' Nursery has had similar growth on their plants and is full to bursting with stock, ready for the Autumn Plant Sale to be held on Saturday 30 April from 10am to 4pm and Sunday 1 May from 10am to 3pm. Please mark the dates in your diary, and do remember that a market trolley is helpful for getting those purchases home.

Our Botanical Illustrators held a very successful exhibition last November, selling many paintings, unframed works, cards and calendars. This year, the Friends will be holding two art exhibitions. The first will be *The Eternal Order in Nature: The Science of Botanical Illustration* exhibition to be held from 18 July to 7 August in Domain House. This is timed to coincide with the XVIIIth International Botanical Congress at the Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre in July 2011. The International Botanical Congress is held every six years, with the last in Vienna in 2005. What is significant about this event is that up to 4,000 scientists from around the world get together to

discuss nomenclature – the naming of plants, as well as all fields of botanical science, including research on plants, algae and fungi. *The Eternal Order in Nature: The Science of Botanical Illustration* will be a great opportunity to present not only 30 of the country's leading talents in botanical illustration, but will also display the diversity of Australian flora and landscape. For more information please see page 8 or visit the exhibition's website:

www.theeternalorderinnature.com

The second exhibition will be held later in the year during October and will feature Eucalypts and natural history.

Don't forget to book quickly for some of our popular Autumn Events, especially the walks and rambles, as these seem to fill up fast. I look forward to seeing many of you at some of our Autumn Events and will be looking in on some of our volunteer groups and committees over the coming months.

We proudly congratulate our 2010 Friends' Scholarship winners shown at right and wish them well with their projects.

Cathy Trinca



The five Friends' Scholarship winners for 2010.

Below, left to right: Dermot Molloy, Acting Nursery Co-ordinator; Ollie Sherlock, Land Management Technician, RBG Cranbourne; Bottom, left to right: Trevor Gallagher, Aboriginal Programs Officer; Tim Wall, Horticultural Technician; Chris Jenek, Nursery Technician.



FROM THE GARDENS AND HERBARIUM

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The Australian Garden at Chelsea 2011

In less than three months the beauty of Australia's plantlife will be wowing visitors to the Australian Garden at the Royal Horticultural Society's Chelsea Flower Show (24-28 May). Designed by award-winning Melbourne designer Jim Fogarty, it is the first time an Australian display garden has been allocated one of Chelsea's prestigious Main Avenue sites. The garden will promote international tourism to Victoria and the Australian Garden, Cranbourne, ahead of the opening of its second stage in early 2012.

Inspired by the themes, landscapes and artworks at the Australian Garden at Cranbourne, the Chelsea display follows a metaphorical

'journey of water' from the arid outback eastward through rivers and gorges to the urbanised coast. Red sand and a white Salt Sculpture by Edwina Kearney and Mark Stoner start the journey. Water first appears as a mound spring flowing into a boomerang-shaped 'river' and then re-appears as a cascade over rusted steel boxes reflecting the iron-rich rocks of inland gorges. A lawn of Australian *Microlaena* turf symbolises green valleys, and the journey ends at the sandy coast and a shady garden pavilion.

More than two thousand individual plants from about 150 species will be celebrating the colours, diversity and shapes of Australia's flora – tiny daisies, striking large grevilleas, grasses and rushes, eremophilas, vibrant Sturt's

desert peas, kangaroo paws, macrozamia, correa, palms, eucalypts and more will all be there! Several rare and threatened species collected through our Victorian Conservation Seed Bank program, plus the new Australian turf, are being specially grown in England for the display.

All the plants are Australian natives – but most have been sourced from specialist nurseries in Britain and Europe. This has avoided the necessity of sending stock from Australia, with consequent environmental and quarantine benefits. A number of the species have not been shown before at Chelsea, and the plants have been selected to reflect the geographical and ecological variety of our flora as well as to inspire British gardeners to learn about and

Front Cover: Interior of historic Rose Pavilion
Back cover: Cumquats
Photos: Jennifer Marshall



Concept design of the proposed Australian Garden at Chelsea.
Photo: With thanks to Jim Fogarty

FROM THE GARDENS AND HERBARIUM

use more Australian plants in their own gardens.

The bulk of the plant stock is being carefully nurtured in a nursery in Somerset. The Snow Gums were unruffled by Britain's icy weather in December and January, but the other plants were very pleased to be safely inside a heated glasshouse. In February two containers were shipped from Melbourne with mudstone rocks, paving stone, red sand (from the Mornington Peninsula!), furnishings and other materials for delivery to our contractors who will be building the garden. Three RBG horticulturists have been selected to join the 'build team' for the planting stages and to help staff the garden during the Show itself. And I suspect many Friends and Melburnians will somehow find their way to Chelsea this year to also experience the beauty and delights of our garden.

The Australian Garden display at Chelsea is being supported by the Victorian Government and Tourism Victoria, by major sponsor Macquarie Group, by other sponsors including Maxwell & Williams, R M Williams and the City of Casey, and by a number of generous individual donors.

Separation Tree

Despite the serious vandalism inflicted in August, the Separation Tree produced a flush of new foliage in Spring. Summer's heat has been alleviated with regular irrigation and monitoring of soil moisture levels, but insect attack on the new

growth required controlling in January. RBG staff and our arboricultural consultants have examined the patch grafting applied to the ring-barking wound, but it is still early days for tissue healing. We will be continuing to check the tree and its health – the signs are encouraging so far, but it will still be months before we know if it can survive.

Working Wetlands

It was inevitable, I suppose – as soon as we started a water project, it was guaranteed to start raining, and it did! Creation of the biofiltering wetland in the eastern end of Nymphaea Lake was delayed by the rains last November and December, but the contractors were able to undertake other works. The underground pipe-jacking and drilling (to avoid open trenches) have now been largely completed, including pipeworks tunnelled for 100m under Birdwood Avenue and the Domain Reserve to link into the stormwater main on Domain Road. Work is now progressing on other biofiltering wetlands in the Ornamental Lake. We are also receiving Federal Government funding for the next stage of the project to enable treated water from the Lake to be used for irrigating the Gardens.

Wildlife in the Gardens

Two new research projects have uncovered some unexpected wildlife happily living in the Melbourne Gardens. We've all seen the turtles basking in the sun in our lakes – but there are actually two species present:

the Common Long-necked Turtle, which we already knew about, but now Samantha Stapleton, a Monash research student, has also identified Murray River Turtles in the Ornamental Lake.

Additionally, staff and a PhD student from our Australian Research Centre for Urban Ecology, supported by Earthwatch volunteers, are studying the small insectivorous bats that live in the Gardens (and, indeed, many other suburban areas). By mid-January their nine nights of live-captures had caught 46 bats in the Gardens from three species – Gould's Wattled Bat, Lesser Long-eared Bat and Chocolate-wattled Bat. Radio-tagged bats have been located roosting in one of the Garden's pavilions, under the possum guard on a palm tree, and in a melaleuca, an oak and a cypress pine. These native mammals are virtually invisible to most of us because of their nocturnal habits – but it's excellent to know that they're living even in the centre of our city.

Philip Moors
Director and Chief Executive



*Above: This photo gives some sense of the size of the bats.
Below: Harp trap on the Oak Lawn. It is a series of fine vertical wires with a catching bag underneath. The bats fly into the wires, are momentarily stunned, and fall into the bag. Many bats are caught in this way in one night.*



Photo: Rodney van der Ree

HISTORIC BUILDINGS

Historic Buildings in the Royal Botanic Gardens

Visitors to the RBG are often surprised when they first pass by buildings that were part of the Old Melbourne Observatory which was established in 1861, decommissioned in 1944, and the site transferred to the Gardens in 1992. At the entrance is the Italianate designed house now known as Gate Lodge (1902) which is the headquarters of the Friends of the RBG. It was formerly home for the Assistant Astronomer, James Mannix, who kept a cow, hens, bees and grew fruit trees and vegetables in the grounds until the 1930s.

The oldest remaining dwelling in the RBG is the Plant Craft Cottage, which was built in 1851 on the northern escarpment overlooking what was then the course of the Yarra River. It was here that the Government Botanist, Ferdinand Mueller, and his two sisters, Bertha and Clara, lived from time to time, and from which Clara was married in 1853. When Mueller was appointed as the first RBG Director in 1857, he moved into the newly-erected Gardens House to which a second storey and detached kitchen wing were added in 1862–63 and 1872. This dwelling served as his office and residence until William Guilfoyle succeeded him in 1873. Guilfoyle moved the office to the newly-erected F Gate Lodge in 1887 and Gardens House continued as the residence for all later Directors until 1991.

A rear extension was made to F Gate Lodge in 1892. Here

Guilfoyle established a Museum of Economic Botany and Plant Products Display that was once described as the finest botanical museum in the Southern Hemisphere. Nearby is the large National Herbarium that was constructed in 1934 following a donation from the philanthropist/confectioner Sir Macpherson Robertson to celebrate Melbourne's Centenary. This building was extended in 1987–89.

Maintenance areas seldom contain buildings of special interest, but this is not so at the RBG. Carpenters still use a large shed that was built in the 1850s, and there is an interesting Paint House in which clerestory windows have been used to provide better lighting. Stables for the horses that pulled the lawnmowers until the late 1940s remain much as they were. Of particular historical interest are sheds to the rear that were prefabricated in London in 1848 using a very early version of corrugated galvanized iron sheets. They were brought to Melbourne by the 40th Army Regiment and once housed officers who were sent to the Eureka Stockade. Guilfoyle acquired the sheds in 1875, and they have been in their present location since 1890. They are now used for offices.

Overlooking the Central Lake is the Rose Pavilion that was first erected as a bandstand in the 1890s and renovated in 1994.

Bordering the Lake is the renovated William Tell Rest House that Guilfoyle had built in 1901 in honour of Charles Joseph La Trobe's Swiss-born wife, Sophie. Renovated, burnt

down, and rebuilt, all in the early 1990s, it is a miniature copy of the William Tell Chapel on Lake Lucerne.

Ian Polmear

*Top right: Gardens House
Top left: Observatory Building
Centre left: Plant Craft Cottage
Centre right: William Tell Rest House
Bottom: Carpenters' Shed
Photos: Meg Miller*



EVENTS



Autumn Guided Visit

TO THE GROWING FRIENDS NURSERY

Friday 18 March at 10.30am
Meet at Gate Lodge (opposite Shrine)
COST: \$5 MEMBERS ONLY
RSVP by Wednesday 16 March on enclosed booking form or download one from the Events page on our website: www.rbgfriendsmelbourne.org
Bookings are essential as numbers will be limited.

Our damp and humid Melbourne Spring and Summer have been magnificent for our gardens, but there is always that bare spot to fill or a plant which needs replacing. This is also an excellent time to settle plants in before the approach of Winter.

Come along and join us for a delicious morning tea at Gate Lodge and meet with like-minded garden enthusiasts. We will then wander down to the Nursery, hear from a member

of the Growing Friends how it operates, and have the opportunity to buy from a wide selection of interesting plants. With the good Summer rains we have had, the Autumn perennials are looking wonderful.

It's a good idea to bring some strong carry bags for your purchases.



Autumn Insiders' Walk

HISTORIC BUILDINGS IN THE ROYAL BOTANIC GARDENS

Tuesday 22 March at 10.00am
Meet at Gate Lodge
COST: \$15 MEMBERS ONLY
RSVP by Tuesday 15 March on enclosed booking form or download one from the Events page on our website: www.rbgfriendsmelbourne.org
The walk will start at Gate Lodge where morning tea will be served.
Book early as numbers are limited.

This is a repeat of our Spring 2010 Insiders' Walk which caused such enormous interest that a large waiting list was created.

In addition to its many significant trees, the RBG has some interesting historic buildings. As we set off, we will pass by several that were once part of the old Melbourne Observatory complex, some of which were first occupied in 1863. We will then call at the Herbarium and F Gate Lodge, which served as Guilfoyle's

original office, and in which he created a Museum of Economic Botany and Plant Products.

Next we will visit the very interesting Maintenance area and then go on to the recently refurbished Volcano Reservoir site. After this we will see the William Tell Shelter, the Rose Pavilion, and call at Gardens House, which was the Directors' residence for about 130 years.



Gould's Book of Plants

ILLUSTRATED TALK BY HAMISH MAXWELL-STEWART & ELEANOR CAVE

Thursday 24 March at 6.00 for 6.30pm
Mueller Hall, National Herbarium
COST: Friends & AGHS members \$15
Non-members \$20. Students \$5 with student card.
RSVP by Friday 18 March on enclosed booking form or download one from the Events page on our website: www.rbgfriendsmelbourne.org
Wine and savouries will be served before the talk.

This is a fascinating story of the convict artist, William Buelow Gould, and his exquisite botanical illustrations. He is famous for his series of watercolours of fish immortalised in Richard Flanagan's book.

The botanical images painted by Gould while assigned to the Colonial Surgeon James Scott rank as the artist's most accomplished, yet least known, work. The Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery, Launceston, now holds 177 of

these botanical studies. Gould had worked in London with the German lithographer Rudolph Ackermann.

Hamish Maxwell-Stewart is an Associate-Professor in the School of History and Classics at the University of Tasmania and is repeating the lecture he delivered at the November 2010 Annual National Conference of the Australian Garden History Society in Launceston.

Note: This is a joint event with Australian Garden History Society.

EVENTS



Autumn Fit Friends' Ramble

A GLIMPSE OF TOORAK STREETS AND GARDENS

Tuesday 5 April at 10.00 am sharp
Meet on the corner of Malvern and Glenferrie Roads at tram stop 43. Catch tram 72 from the city or Camberwell or tram 16 along Glenferrie Rd.

Unlimited parking in Glenferrie Road.

COST: \$15 \$25 Non members

RSVP by Friday 25 March on enclosed booking form or download one from the Events page on our website: www.rbgfriendsmelbourne.org
Book early as numbers will be limited.

In 1849 James Jackson, a merchant, bought 71 acres of land bounded by the present Malvern, Kooyong and Toorak Roads. This area was fenced and leased for farming. Then in the 1880s, Jackson's paddock was subdivided into smaller blocks and several mansions were built. A generation or two later many of these properties were subdivided and new houses rose in their place. Most of this occurred in the 1930s and after World War II in the 1950s.

We will walk along lovely tree-lined streets looking at the history of some of the large properties and significant houses on the way. There will be the rare opportunity to visit one or two private gardens. Morning tea will be at your own expense at the café behind the Uniting Church in Toorak Road. Afterwards we can walk back to Glenferrie Road via another route or catch a tram. We expect to finish our ramble at about 12.30 pm.



Autumn Talking Plants

VERSATILE SHRUBS

Friday 29 April at 10.00am
Domain House, Dallas Brooks Drive

Cost: \$10 \$15 Non-members

RSVP by Monday 18 April on enclosed booking form or download one from the Events page on our website: www.rbgfriendsmelbourne.org
Book early as numbers will be limited

Refreshments will be served during the morning.

Shrubs are versatile plants suitable for many situations and purposes. Due to their shape, form, height and width they can be put to practical or decorative use to enhance any garden landscape.

Attributes of this group include differing flowers, leaf colour, shape and form. There are both evergreen and deciduous varieties which can be used for hedging, screening and groundcover, all combining to provide seasonal colour.

A knowledgeable person will talk to us and show a range of shrubs to illustrate cultivation and cultural use. The discussion will include valuable growing advice and there will be plenty of opportunities to have your questions answered.



Botanising In South Africa

ILLUSTRATED TALK BY GARRY REID

Wednesday 25 May at 10.00 for 10.30 am

Mueller Hall, National Herbarium

COST: \$15 \$25 Non-members

RSVP by Friday 20 May on enclosed booking form or download one from the Events page on our website: www.rbgfriendsmelbourne.org

Morning tea will be served before the talk.

The south western corner of South Africa is renowned for its biodiversity and for being one of the richest areas for plants in the world. Garry will tell us about a trip he and his wife Sue took to this part of South Africa to study the bulbs found there, so that they could understand how to grow them better here in Australia.

They concentrated on two areas: the Cape Floral Kingdom, which, although it is the smallest of the six floral kingdoms,

is home to more varieties of indigenous plants than any other similar sized area on Earth, and Namaqualand, a semi-desert area to the north of Cape Town. These two areas contain more than 1200 different bulbs, the greatest density to be found in any area on the planet.

Garry will look at the landscape and the habitats and show some of the plants found there.

A selection of bulbs from Garry's nursery will be available for sale.

THE ETERNAL ORDER IN NATURE:

Exhibition in Melbourne in July and August 2011



In July 2011 the XVIII International Botanical Congress will be held in Melbourne and up to 4000 scientists from around the world will gather to discuss all fields of botanical science, including research on plants, algae and fungi, and nomenclature (the naming of plants).

The Congress, held every six years, will provide a wonderful opportunity to showcase the depth and breadth of Australian talent in botanical illustration and display the diversity of Australian flora and landscape to an international audience.

Three of our botanical illustrators, Mali Moir, Amanda Ahmed and John Pastoriza-Piñol, are curating an exhibition of work by invited artists which will be hosted by the Friends to coincide with the Congress.

The exhibition, *The Eternal Order in Nature: The Science of Botanical Illustration*, will be held in Domain House from 18 July to 7 August 2011. Please put this in your calendar now as it will be a very special show.

We hope the exhibition will:

- Generate an awareness of botanical illustration as a means of documenting and recording information, and highlight the value of this information in scientific research.
- Highlight botanical illustration's historical and ongoing contribution to shaping and educating our understanding of Australian flora.
- Showcase the talent and skills of scientific botanical illustrators in Australia to the international scientific community attending the Congress, and the general public.

We have invited thirty of Australia's leading botanical illustrators including Celia Rosser and Jenny Phillips to contribute a body of work which focuses on a particular project or plant species.

This series of projects will provide an insight into the methods and processes of botanical illustration, present collaborative projects with botanists and offer the viewer a better understanding and appreciation of the skills required to produce such

beautiful and accurate works with their capacity to blur the boundaries between art and science.

We will also highlight some key Australian historical figures in botanical illustration whose works have provided a rich and important foundation for the continued growth of this discipline.

Examples of early Australian work which will be displayed in the exhibition.



Above: Frederick Schoenfeld
Lasiopetalum behrii.
Below: Frederick Schoenfeld
Pomaderris biaurita

Clearly, mounting this important exhibition, to showcase Australian excellence in botanical illustration, will require substantial funding. The Friends are seeking financial sponsorship to cover the running costs of the exhibition including the publication of the catalogue.

Sponsorship

Sponsorship is available in three categories which are named in honour of three of Australia's most renowned botanical illustrators:

ELLIS ROWAN SPONSORS: FROM \$3000

Ellis Rowan (1848 – 1922). Born and educated in Melbourne, Rowan was a brilliant Australian naturalist, painter and illustrator, producing some of the most powerfully arresting flower paintings recorded in Australian art. She painted more species of Australian and international flora than any other artist of her era, exploring the world to find exotic flowers, plants, birds and butterflies.

LOUISA ANN MEREDITH SPONSORS: FROM \$2000

Louisa Ann Meredith (1812–1895). Author, artist and poet, Meredith's observation of colonial life and study of bush flora and fauna provided material for her 7 books between 1842 and 1891. Her wildflower drawings won medals in exhibitions in Australia and overseas. Historian Douglas Pike described her as 'a poet in feeling, an artist by instinct, a naturalist by force of circumstances, a keen botanist, and an ardent lover of landscape scenery'.

THE SCIENCE OF BOTANICAL ILLUSTRATION

BETTY CONABERE SPONSORS: FROM \$1000

Betty Conabere (1929 – 2009). Born in Alexandra, Victoria and based in Mansfield, Conabere was commissioned by the Maud Gibson Trust in 1965 to produce 50 paintings of Victorian alpine plants for the State Botanical Collection. Conabere was known and loved for her passion for painting Australian plants and her commitment to conservation. Conabere's painting of *Eucalyptus pauciflora* subsp. *niphophila* has been chosen as the exhibition logo in commemoration of her life devoted to botanical art.

Sponsors will be acknowledged, including their corporate logos, in promotional material, on the website, in the exhibition catalogue and in

the Winter and Spring editions of our quarterly magazine, *Botanic News*. A sponsorship form is included in this edition. While sponsorship provides an opportunity to highlight involvement with this important exhibition, individual donations will also be very welcome and will be acknowledged in *Botanic News*.

Exhibition Publicity

We have set up a website for the exhibition, www.eternalorderinnature.net and a Facebook page; these will be updated regularly with interesting information about the exhibition and the artists.

Exhibitions of this size require a significant volunteer workforce to help with the organisation and staffing of the show. If you would like to become involved please

contact the Friends' office on 9650 6398. Some of the Members who are organising the exhibition are shown in the photo below at our last meeting in 2010.

Thea Clark



Thea Clark, Mali Moir, Maurice Castro, Amanda Ahmed and Susie Brookes



Betty Conabere's painting of Pimelea ligustrina



The exhibition logo is detail from Betty Conabere's painting of Eucalyptus pauciflora subsp. niphophila.

ILLUSTRATORS

Classes

Term 2 will start in the week beginning Saturday 30 April. Classes will be held on Tuesday and Wednesday evenings and in the daytime on Mondays, Wednesdays and Saturdays (two sessions each day – 2.5hr), Thursdays (one 2.5hr session) and Fridays (one 3hr session).
2.5hr classes: \$270 (incl GST)
Friends: \$225 (incl GST)
3hr classes: \$315 (incl GST)
Friends: \$270 (incl GST)
For further information about classes contact the Friends' office on 9650 6398.



Corymbia painted by Marta Salamon

Beginners' Workshop

WITH MALI MOIR

11, 13 and 14 April (Please note no class on 12 April)

10.00am to 4.00pm

Cost: \$272 Friends: \$225

This intensive course is an introduction to botanical art via pencil and watercolour. Students will begin to develop skills in outline drawing, foreshortening, tonal work and rendering of surfaces, basic colour work and paint application. The workshop is an ideal way to learn the basics before enrolling in Term Classes.

The cost includes drawing materials, paint, watercolour paper and brushes and morning and afternoon tea.

For bookings and further information, please contact the Friends' office on 9650 6398.

Botanical Illustrators

QUARTERLY MEETING

Tuesday 29 March at 10.00am for 10.30am in the Whirling Room. Cost \$5.50. Pay on the day.

Mali Moir, botanical artist and teacher of botanical illustration, will give a talk entitled 'Beckler's Botanical Bounty'. She will describe a collecting and painting trip to Menindee in celebration of the one hundred and fiftieth anniversary of the Burke and Wills expedition. Hermann Beckler was the doctor and botanical collector on that expedition.

Whirlybirds

The Whirlybirds are a group of botanical artists who meet each Tuesday in the Whirling Room Studio. This group has been so well attended another meeting is now being held on Thursday mornings.

At present work is being completed for the *Eucalypts of the Royal Botanic Gardens*. The exhibition will be on display in Domain House from Saturday 1 October to Sunday 16 October.

If you are a botanical artist and a member of the Friends you are invited to select a eucalypt to illustrate and join the exhibition. A list is in the Whirling Room along with relevant information.

A natural history exhibition is also being held concurrently with the *Eucalypts* Exhibition.

If you are interested in joining the group or exhibiting please contact Sandra Sanger on 9598 9532 for further information.

Vale Beverley Graham

Members of the FRBG Melbourne and Botanical Illustrators were deeply saddened to hear of the passing of Beverley Graham on 3 December 2010 aged 78. Beverley joined the Friends in April 1988 and was a foundation member of the Botanical Illustrators' group.

At the time the Botanical Illustrators' group was formed, there were few botanic artists working in Melbourne or, indeed, Australia. In company with Anita Barley (at the RBG Melbourne), Jenny Phillips and Celia Rosser, Beverley Graham's name was foremost as an exponent of botanical art.

Bev received training as a designer in graphic art, and her silk screen designs and fabrics are included in the collections of the Australian National Gallery and RMIT University. This early training is evident in much of her botanic work. While she occasionally accepted commissions to paint exotic flora, Bev was passionate about promoting our wonderful and unique Australian native flora, with much of her output adorning cards and stationery produced by Pettis Studios.

Amongst a wealth of other achievements, Bev produced eight botanical watercolours for a Plant of the Month series in *Your Garden* magazine; painted a beautiful floral bouquet for Australia Post's first 'Thinking of

You' stamp; was commissioned to create a circular design featuring the Australian and State floral emblems for Franklin Mint's *Australian Federation Flora* plate; and her work is represented in the State Botanical Art Collection housed at the Herbarium. In 1999, Bev was presented with a Certificate of Commendation by the Society for Growing Australian Plants, Victoria, in recognition of her promotion of Australian flora in her watercolours. Bev was one of the first botanic artists to have limited edition prints produced. In fact, she was the only artist offering prints at our first exhibition.

With Lois Brunt, Bev set up and ran the sales desk at early *The Art of Botanical Illustration* exhibitions. During our first few years, Bev was a frequent attendee at Whirlybirds meetings where she generously shared her accumulated knowledge and imparted a deal of practical advice. Bev's output gradually decreased as her health deteriorated, but she was always delighted to receive telephone calls from her artist friends.

A warm, generous and immensely talented botanic artist with a delightful sense of humour and a wicked throaty chuckle, Beverley Graham will be sadly missed by all who knew her.

Helene Wild

A sample of Beverley's wildflower paintings.



ILLUSTRATORS

Botanical Illustrators' Christmas Meeting

ARTISTS' TRIP TO NED'S CORNER

Six of our members recently journeyed to this Trust for Nature property in far north-western Victoria to explore and paint. During our Christmas meeting, we heard an entertaining account of their trip. Sandra Sanger and Joan Mason, who had previously visited Ned's Corner with a group from RBG Cranbourne, organised a return journey focused primarily on painting. Sandra and Joan began by describing the route to the vast 30,000 hectare property on the southern banks of the Murray, 80kms west of Mildura, by 4-wheel drive.

Many indigenous species are found at Ned's Corner, as well as a beautiful *Brachychiton*. The property, once a sheep and cattle run, has now been emptied of livestock, and continuous efforts are made to control rabbits and restore the native vegetation. This work relies heavily on volunteers. Several of the artists remarked

on the wonders to be found in the huge and ancient tip.

Margaret Holloway described the general landscape, at that time covered with flowers (pigface) as far as the eye could see. The semi-desert was blooming due to recent rain. Kaye Ellis focused on the birdlife, including sightings of swans, apostle birds and their mud-pot nests, and ring-necked mallee parrots. Nolda Beynon told us about the Australian Inland Botanic Gardens, which the group also visited to see many lovely examples of *Eucalyptus illyarrie*, *E. torquata* and *E. woodwardii*. This garden is in NSW, between Mildura and Wentworth. It has semi-arid plants from all over the world and is undertaking a project on plants suitable for saline environments and rising water tables. It also has a famous collection of roses, and a summerhouse with a ceiling entirely covered with gum nuts of many species. The artists strongly recommended a visit to these gardens to anyone who finds themselves in the area. They described the work carried out on a shoestring

budget, mainly by volunteers, as 'impressive'.

The expeditioners showed their photos, sketches and paintings from the trip. Pam McDiarmid had 146 beautiful photos of Ned's Corner, shown on a continuous loop during our lunch.

PAM'S HURDY-GURDY

As well as being a talented artist and photographer, Pam McDiarmid is an accomplished woodworker, with an interest in music. She showed us the latest fruit of this combined interest, a Hurdy-Gurdy, and described how she made it,

following informal instructions from a fellow enthusiast and using information from the internet. The Hurdy-Gurdy is a traditional folk instrument from the 12th century which has been described as a cross between a violin and bagpipes. It has both drone strings and keyed strings, played by a wheel turned by the right hand. Pam made the lute-like body of her instrument from English Ash from her own garden. The soundboard is of King Billy Pine, decorated with an ebony inlay. Pam carved the head, and even made the brass crank handle. After describing the making of the Hurdy-Gurdy, Pam played us a few short tunes, including 'Scotland the Brave'.

Before beginning our celebratory lunch, we said a big thank you to Judy Jarman, who has organised the Botanical Illustrators Quarterly Meetings for many years, and wished everyone the compliments of the season.

Roslyn Glow

Below left: Artists in residence at Ned's Corner.

Left: Pam with her Hurdy-Gurdy
Below: The carved handle of the instrument.



Photos: Pam McDiarmid

GROWING FRIENDS

Autumn Plant Sale

Saturday 30 April
from 10.00am to 4.00pm
Sunday 1 May
from 10.00am to 3.00pm

Nursery Open Days in Autumn

Friday 4, 11, 18 & 25 March
Friday 1 & 8 April
Friday 27 May
between 8.00am and 1.00pm

On 19 November 2010, Gillian Kirk planted a tree, *Pinus armandii*, in the Hopetoun Lawn to commemorate the contribution of the Growing Friends to RBG Melbourne.

Melbourne's cool and wet Spring and early Summer delayed the flowering of many plants. But, as the weather warmed, the plants grew rapidly and flowered profusely. We trust this is a good omen for the Autumn Plant Sale.

There are only two Growing Friends' Sales each year and only a small number of the plants on sale are flowering. Therefore Friends are urged to visit the Nursery on the Open Days (as shown above) not only to see the plants in flower but also to discover the range of plants grown there.

Alternatively, there are the Nursery visits arranged by the Events committee, which take

place every quarter. These are a good way to learn what the Growing Friends do, how the Nursery operates and what plants are for sale.

The next of these visits is on 18 March when, because of the cooler Summer, many of the penstemons and salvias will still be in flower.

Michael Hare
Convener, Growing Friends

Gillian Kirk with Members of the Friends.

Bottom: Penstemons available from the Growing Friends' Nursery. Photo: Michael Hare



Growing Friends' Tree

Commemorative trees are an important component of the Melbourne Gardens' tree collection. The stories of a number of these commemorative trees and tales of those who planted them were featured on page five of the last edition of *Botanic News*.

Last November a commemorative tree of particular significance to the Friends was planted on the Hopetoun Lawn by a founding member and first Convener of the Growing Friends, Gillian Kirk, who retired from that group

in February 2010. The tree was planted in recognition of those who founded the Growing Friends in 1988 and the wonderful contribution made since by the many others who have worked so hard to ensure the group's continuing success. Many past and present members of the Group attended the ceremony.

In his remarks at the planting, Dr Philip Moors, Director and Chief Executive of the RBG, paid tribute to all those involved in the Growing Friends and in particular to Gillian and her late husband, Neil, who in addition to the work they were both doing with Lydia Bartlett and others in starting up the Growing Friends, were also Voluntary Guides. Gillian was Convener of the Guides in 1989-1990.

The beautiful tree chosen for the planting, a splendid specimen of *Pinus armandii*, was also of significance to the Friends. It had been propagated in the RBG Melbourne Nursery from seed collected in Yunnan Province in south-west China in 1992 by horticulturalist Terry Smyth, curator of the Gardens' Southern Chinese collection. Terry's trip to China was funded in the main by a grant from the Friends.

Janet Thomson



MEMBERS

New Members' Welcome

Wednesday 16 March at 5.30pm
Mueller Hall, National Herbarium
Birdwood Ave, South Yarra

Please join us for the New Members' Welcome! Invitations will soon be sent to all recently-joined Friends to come to our next 'Getting-to-know-you' gathering. Drinks and nibbles will be served while you mingle and meet other new members. Learn about the Friends' wide range of activities in a friendly and relaxed atmosphere with conveners of all groups on hand to provide information. Finish up with a special tour of the Gardens with an expert Voluntary Guide.

All those who have joined the Friends since our last Welcome, and those who have already requested an invitation to a evening Welcome, will automatically receive one. If you have not been able to attend a previous New Members' Welcome and would like to come this time, you are warmly invited as well, so please call our office 9650 6398 and we'll make sure you are invited.

Friends' Office Manager Virginia Henderson talking with RBGM Director Chris Cole and Vice-President Susie Brookes at the Council Christmas luncheon.



Friends' Membership Prize

Congratulations to Household Members Eleanor and Paul Schreurs, who won the Friends' Membership Prize offered for the last quarter in 2010. They live in Langwarrin and are delighted with their success. The prize is a year's free membership.

At the end of each quarter in 2011, all Members who have paid their fee by the date printed on their first renewal notice will be eligible to win a prize. The first draw in 2011 will be at the end of March.

Be in it to win it – renew and be part of the draw when it's your quarter!

WHY RENEW?

By renewing your membership you give wonderful support to the Gardens through the Friends. A loyal and supportive membership has enabled the Friends to provide over \$1.6 million for projects in the Gardens and Herbarium and give other help where it is needed.

*Lee Tregloan, Convener
Membership and Marketing*

These businesses and organisations kindly offer discounts to Friends on PRIOR presentation of their current membership cards, which are not transferable.

The Gardens Shops at RBGM offer 10% discount on all Members' purchases.

Terrace Tea Rooms, RBGM, offers Members 10% discount on all purchases. www.terracerception.com.au

RBG Cranbourne - Australian Garden: Entry fee \$7.35. Non-members \$9.80.

National Gallery of Victoria offers 10% discount at the NGV shop and \$10 off NGV annual membership (new membership only). For membership enquiries contact 8620 2233 or email: members@ngv.vic.gov.au

The Australian Chamber Orchestra is offering tickets at 10% discount to current Friends' Members for its Melbourne Sunday Afternoon concerts. Book online, www.aco.com.au Remember to mention Friends' membership when booking by phone.

Discounts are subject to change without notice. List is current at January 2011.

Botanical Creations

122 Grange Rd, Glen Huntly
Ph: 9571 9922
10% off all plants

Bulleen Art and Garden

6 Manningham Rd West, Bulleen
www.baag.com.au
10% off plants, 5% off other goods (excludes paving/retaining walls, tanks and turf)

Cloudehill Nursery - Gardens - Restaurant

89 Olinda-Monbulk Rd, Olinda
www.cloudehill.com.au
10% off plants only

Collectors Corner (at Garden World)

810 Springvale Rd, Braeside
www.gardenworld.com.au
10% off all plants, Collectors Corner only

Cultivate Nursery, Florist & Gifts

Rear 91-93 Doncaster Rd, North Balwyn
www.cultivenursery.com.au
10% off everything

Feldspar at Trentham B&B

via Daylesford
www.feldspargetaway.com.au
10% discount off accommodation

Garden of Eden Nursery, Cafe & Antiques

365 Ferrars St, Albert Park
www.gardenofedennursery.com.au
10% off everything (cash)
5% off everything (credit cards)

Glasshaus Nursery/Design/Florist

52 Stanley St, Richmond
Ph: 9421 4100
10% off plants and cut flowers

Green-stay – innovative products for the landscape gardener, architect and builder

www.green-stay.com.au
10% discount on any garden products.
Order on website or phone 1300 976 664.
Mention Friends' Membership.

Lister Teak Garden Furniture

22 Industry Court, Lilydale
Ph: 9735 4010
Free 100-page colour catalogue of Cotswold Furniture Collection. Free delivery.

Peonies & Picnics - quality tools, specialised gardening books

8 Howe St, Daylesford
Ph: 5348 1882
10% discount.

Sculptured Steel Custom Metalwork

www.sculpturedsteel.com.au
10% off custom-made pieces

Sue Jarvis' Gallery & Botanic Garden

24 Blackwood Lane, Gembrook
By appointment Ph: 5968 1567
10% off artworks

Town and Country Gardens

1280 Malvern Rd, Malvern
Ph: 9822 9704

24 Whitehorse Rd, Balwyn
Ph: 9816 9300

www.townandcountrygardens.com.au
10% off plants over \$20 only

SCHOLARSHIP REPORT

'Cradle of Creation'

2010 INTERNATIONAL PLANT PROPAGATORS SOCIETY CONFERENCE

This conference was held in Fremantle, Western Australia. I was one of 22 main speakers at the conference which attracted about 200 participants, mostly from the Nursery industry, but also from Landcare and government organisations such as AQIS (Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service). The theme of the 2010 conference was *Cradle of Creation*. Fremantle was a fitting place to host such a program as it was a landing place for many of the convicts sent from England who played such a major role in the early development of this country.

The conference started off with seed collection, storage and record keeping. Then Rowena Long, of Kings Park, Perth, presented an update on smoke water which is used to simulate the aftermath of a bushfire to help indigenous seeds generate. Previously, it was believed that butenolide was the isotope responsible for breaking dormancy of Australian native seed. Rowena and her team have now identified the element as karrikinolide and the fact that it stimulates germination at rates as low as one part per billion.

Paul Carmen spoke about ACRA, the Australian Cultivar Registry Association, which was appointed by the International Society for Horticultural Science to register cultivars for Australian natives. ACRA is located at the National Botanic Gardens in Canberra.

While this seems to be a useful registry, there are limitations: it is a collation of information, not a verification system, and descriptions are not always accurate. For example, there are at least three *Correas* sold as 'Gwen'.

Two speakers caused quite a lot of discussion because they presented two different approaches to taxonomy. Botanist Kevin Thiele spoke about Cladistics, the phylogeny of flowering plants and why it makes sense to cluster plants by following the genetics they share (the very similar *Dryandra* and *Banksia* were given as examples). In the other corner of the ring was botanist Alex George, who advocates Linnaean taxonomy. He believes that Cladistics is a drastic re-clumping of plants based on too limited a selection of target species, arguing that no vouchers were used or put forward for future reference/discussion; that only small amounts of DNA were used; and, among other things, that Cladistics neither allows for changes, nor does it make teaching plant identification very easy. I must admit that of all the arguments against classifying plants genetically, teaching students plant identification skills, based on characteristics, tops the list for me. Morphological characteristics give a better picture of the relationship between plants.

Amanda Shade, head of the Nursery at Kings Park, gave an interesting talk about grafting Western Australian species and the variety of rootstock they have tested. Each trial

compared strike rate, strengths (like compatibility and hardiness), weaknesses such as susceptibility to rot or disease, and longevity of grafted plants. I learned a great deal about rootstock/scion trials and look forward to putting that information to good use at Cranbourne.

Digby Gowns and Pat Courtenay, also from Kings Park, both gave wonderful talks. Digby spoke about breeding new plants and the work being carried out at Kings Park. Many of us are familiar with plants that he and his team have bred, like *Scaevola* 'Purple Fanfare'. Pat Courtenay told the amazing story of moving a 750-year-old Boab from the Kimberley to Kings Park. The tree not only survived its ordeal, but has since flowered!

There was also a great deal of discussion about new strains of phytophthora after a paper presented by Kylie Ireland, a PhD student from the Centre for Phytophthora Science and Management. More discussion followed a BioSecure HACCP (an on-farm biosecurity management system) report presented by Michael Danelon, a NGINA (Nursery and Garden Industry) Development officer, about the Myrtle Rust affecting Australian natives.

Lachlan Chilman, who owns and operates an IPM business that rears beneficial insects, gave a very interesting talk, and we actually visited his nursery (in the true sense of the word!) to see the predator insects he breeds on a large scale for nurseries and farmers trying to avoid chemical spraying.

I have only mentioned a few of the speakers who stood out for me, but there were many others who gave interesting papers, some incredible nursery tours and a few social events that made the 2010 IPPS Conference truly fascinating.

One of the nurseries we visited was Benara, a 400-hectare wholesale production nursery. Imagine that! A nursery bigger than all of RBGC put together! I made new friends and contacts from South Africa and caught up with some IPPS members from Brisbane, Sydney and New Zealand.

If that were not enough, I was able to add on a week at Kings Park to take cuttings for Stage 1 and 2 of the Australian Garden, plus some interesting plants that I hope will make their way into the Australian Garden! We also spent time at GinGin and Muchea collecting specimens.

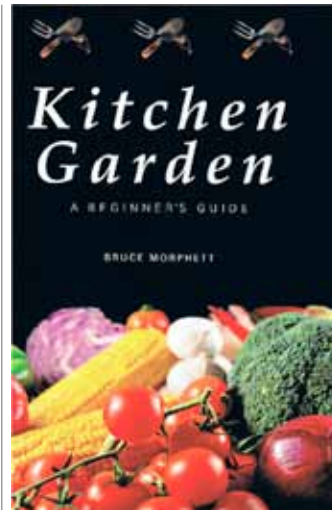
I am so very grateful to the RBGM Friends' Scholarship Program which enabled my participation in the IPPS Conference and my study/work week at Kings Park.

Cali Salzmann
Horticulture Technician, RBGC
Friends' Scholarship winner 2009



BOOK REVIEW

Top: A very old seed cleaning machine at Kings Park.
Middle: Modern reverse osmosis water-recycling unit.
Bottom: Muchea plant farm delivery truck.
Left page – bottom: Kings Park's famous Boab tree which flowered this year



Pruning for Fruit

Bruce Morphet, Revised edition 2008

Kitchen Garden – A Beginner's Guide

Bruce Morphet, 2010

Citrus – A Gardener's Guide

Bruce Morphet and Ian Tolley, revised edition 2009

Published by the Botanic Gardens of Adelaide

All three books RRP \$19.95

In these three handy-sized how-to books, Bruce Morphet clearly demonstrates the knowledge he has acquired in his thirty years plus as a horticulturalist, specialising in growing fruit and vegetables and solving horticultural problems.

Pruning for Fruit is for the beginner, as well as the enthusiast. It clearly illustrates the when, what and how of maintaining good fruit size and obtaining quality and quantity cropping for a wide range of backyard fruits. All of which will ensure a full and productive life for these increasingly

important garden plants.

Kitchen Gardens provides extensive and comprehensive information for anyone wishing to establish or enhance a kitchen garden. The information ranges from soil preparation to providing nutrition and watering, to information about particular vegetables, their growth habits and associated problems. Most importantly, it addresses how and when to harvest the produce and how best to store it.

Citrus has been written with Ian Tolley OAM who is an internationally recognised horticulturalist and an expert in citriculture.

In this book is everything the beginner grower would want to know about different citrus varieties, choosing plants, managing plants and providing the correct nutrients for the best crops. Strangely there is no mention of the citrus gall wasp – increasingly prevalent here in Victoria – in the extensive and otherwise comprehensive 'citrus problems' chapter.

The books are a good size, which means it would be possible to hold one while diagnosing a problem. The production is glossy, the information is clear and the illustrations informative. Each book provides a comprehensive further reading list which includes internet links.

Terri Kay

March

- 4 Growing Friends' Nursery open 8.00am to 1.00pm
- 11 Growing Friends' Nursery open 8.00am to 1.00pm
- 16 New Members' Welcome 5.30pm
- 18 Growing Friends' Nursery open 8.00am to 1.00pm
- 18 Guided Nursery Visit
- 22 Insiders' Walk
- 24 Illustrated Talk - Gould
- 25 Growing Friends' Nursery open 8.00am to 1.00pm
- 29 Illustrators' Quarterly Meeting 10.00am

April

- 1 Growing Friends' Nursery open 8.00am to 1.00pm
- 5 Fit Friends' Ramble
- 8 Growing Friends' Nursery open 8.00am to 1.00pm
- 11,13,14 Botanical Illustration Beginners' Workshop
- 22 Good Friday
- 29 Talking Plants - shrubs
- 30 Term II Illustrators' Classes begin
- 30 Growing Friends' Plant Sale 10.00am to 4.00pm

May

- 1 Growing Friends' Plant Sale 10.00am to 3.00pm
- 25 Illustrated Talk - Bulbs
- 27 Growing Friends' Nursery open 8.00am to 1.00pm

July

- 18 Eternal Order in Nature Exhibition opens

August

- 7 Eternal Order in Nature Exhibition closes

Note: The Friends' Inclement Weather Policy states that Outdoor Events may be cancelled and the Nursery will not open for Sales if the temperature is predicted to be 33°C or above.

BOTANIC NEWS is produced quarterly for Friends of the Royal Botanic Gardens, Melbourne Inc. which was formed to stimulate further interest in the Gardens and the National Herbarium and to support and assist them whenever possible.

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