

NOTICE is hereby given that the twenty-second Annual General Meeting of the Friends of the Royal Botanic Gardens, Melbourne Incorporated (the 'Friends') will be held at 8.00 pm on Monday 17 November 2008 in the Mueller Hall, National Herbarium of Victoria, Birdwood Avenue, South Yarra.

BUSINESS

1. To confirm the minutes of the twenty-first Annual General Meeting held on 19 November 2007.
2. To receive from the Council a report of the activities of the Friends for the year ended 30 June 2008.
3. To elect members of the Council. The following, being eligible, have been duly nominated for election as stated:

President	Janet Thomson
Vice-President	Catherine Trinca
Treasurer	Maurice Castro
Ordinary Members	Susan Chandler John Hawker Peter Kelly
4. To receive and consider the financial statements of the Friends for the year ended 30 June 2008, which have been duly audited.

By order of the Council

Richard Smith, Secretary

Dated this 10th day of October 2008

Notes

1. *A Member may appoint a proxy to vote on his or her behalf at the meeting by giving notice to the Secretary, to be received not later than 48 hours before the time of the meeting, by the use of a form that may be obtained on application at the Friends' office.*
2. *No business other than that set out in this notice may be conducted at the meeting.*

At the conclusion of the Annual General Meeting the President will present:-

VOLUNTEER SERVICE AWARDS TO MEMBERS WITH 10 OR MORE YEARS OF VOLUNTARY SERVICE

and

THE FRIENDS' STAFF SCHOLARSHIP AWARDS

The evening will conclude with a presentation by **Dr Pina Milne, Manager, Collections, RBG Melbourne**. Pina will talk about her expedition with Australian Geographic to the remote Hay River in Central Australia and the Herbarium collections, old and new, relevant to the trip.

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE FRIENDS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2008

Patron Professor David de Kretser AC, Governor of Victoria

Council 2007–2008

President	Janet Thomson *
Vice-President	Catherine Trinca *
Vice-President	Dr Richard Kirsner #
Immediate Past President	Irwin Newman
Secretary	Richard Smith #
Treasurer	Maurice Castro *
Members	Susan Brookes #
	John Goodwin #
	John Hawker *
	Judy Jarman #
	Peter Kelly *
	Dr Philip Moors
	David Plant *
	Sir Ninian Stephen *

* Retires Annual General Meeting 2008

Retires Annual General Meeting 2009

Trustees of the Friends' Trust Fund

Dr R Sharwood (Chairman), F V Phillips and L J Cohn (Secretary)

Friends' Staff

Administrative Officer	Virginia Henderson
Administrative Assistant	Helen Fahey
Assistant Treasurer	Jackie Courmadias
Botanical Illustration Teachers	Dianne Emery, Mali Moir (contractor)

Editor, *Botanic News* Meg Miller

Conveners of Committees at 30 June 2007

Events	Susie Brookes
Botanical Illustrators	Edyta Hoxley
Catering	Pauline Morrison
Finance	Richard Smith
Grants	Janet Thomson
Growing Friends	Juliana Horsfall
Helping Hands	Irwin Newman
I T and Equipment	Dr Richard Kirsner
Operations	Catherine Trinca
Promotions & Membership	Catherine Trinca
Publications	Meg Miller
Volunteers	John Goodwin

From the President

It is very pleasing to note that the financial outcome for the year under review was very good with a surplus of \$41,047. This surplus will enable us to increase our funding to the Royal Botanic Gardens during the coming year.

The Trustees of our Trust Fund and the Friends' Finance Committee continued to consult with the Director and Chief Executive of the Royal Botanic Gardens as to how best the income from the bequest left to the Friends by the late Helen McLellan can benefit the Botanic Gardens in the long term. The Friends were most appreciative of a further bequest of \$10,000 received this year from the Estate of Yvonne Knight.

Support for the Friends' project *Water Works Water Wise* continued with grants totaling \$77,000 being approved by the Trustees of the Friends' Trust Fund and Council - \$52,000 for the installation of a new misting system in the Fern Gully and \$25,000 for the repair of the Ornamental Lake Outlet Pipe.

At the Annual General Meeting on 19 November 2007, it gave me great pleasure to announce that Peter Symes, Melbourne Gardens Division, and Megan Hirst, Plant Sciences and Biodiversity Division were the winners of the inaugural Friends' Scholarship. Our thanks go to the Selection Panel, Prof David Cantrill representing the RBG, and Peter Kelly representing the Friends.

Working collaboratively with Friends groups in other botanic gardens is a high priority for the Melbourne Friends. Last November, in conjunction with the Friends of the Gardens, Sydney, we welcomed David Howard who at that time was Head Gardener to His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales at Highgrove House in Gloucestershire. David gave three excellent lectures to capacity audiences. Further tours are planned.

Another enriching experience for Members occurred in May when a group traveled to Greece on a tour organized for the Friends by Caroline Davies Garden Tours. Participants enjoyed the splendours of spring flowers in the wild and visited a number of beautiful private gardens.

In February the Growing Friends celebrated their 20th anniversary. This skilful, dedicated Group has raised well over \$800,000 since it was founded and we congratulate all those involved over the years on this fine achievement. The efficiency of the Growing Friends' Nursery has been improved with the replacement of the old portable office building with a much-needed more spacious new one and by re-organising the area around the new building.

A review was undertaken of administrative arrangements at Gate Lodge. The outcome of this review involved the recruitment of more office volunteers for reception and other duties, the purchase of new computer equipment and new office furniture making for a more efficient and organized working area.

The Director and Chief Executive of the Royal Botanic Gardens, Dr Philip Moors, is a member of Council and briefs us on major matters. The Secretary, Treasurer and I regularly meet him to review matters of mutual interest and to co-ordinate our plans with those of the Gardens. We value his counsel and thank him and his staff for their support of the Friends.

The Secretary, Treasurer and I also continued our practice of meeting with our counterparts from the Committee of the Friends of the Royal Botanic Gardens, Cranbourne. These meetings are a valuable way of sharing ideas and information and we look forward to furthering our collaboration in the future.

Members give their support to the Gardens via the Friends in different and greatly valued ways. In a voluntary capacity, they give generously of their time, energy and skills organizing and administering all the wide-ranging program of events, excursions, plant propagation, exhibitions and sales. The Friends could not survive without this commitment and enthusiasm from so many hardworking people. Support is also given by those who attend our functions, classes and sales and by making donations to our Trust Fund. On behalf of Council, I extend to all involved our appreciation and thanks.

I also greatly appreciate the support and help of all those with whom I work in the Friends, and in particular I thank the hard-working, efficient staff at Gate Lodge – our Administrative Officer, Virginia Henderson, and Helen Fahey and Jackie Courmadias. Being associated with such an excellent team of volunteers and staff makes my role as President a very rewarding one.

The Council of the Friends

The Friends depend for their existence on the contribution of many volunteers. The Council, which is responsible for controlling and managing the affairs of the Friends, consists of volunteers elected by the Members at Annual General Meetings.

In order to generate funds to provide grants to the RBG and offer activities and services to our Members, Council has established a number of Committees of Members who volunteer to carry out certain activities. The reports of the various Committees are included below.

Administration

Two resolutions considered and passed by Members attending the 2007 Annual General Meeting were subsequently approved by the Registrar and incorporated into the Rules. Their effect has been to simplify the processes of registering new members and cancelling the membership of those who fail to renew their subscriptions. The Registrar also required the Friends to add to the Rules a new Clause 10A concerning grievance procedures. A copy of the Friends' Statement of Purposes and Rules is available from Gate Lodge.

As a consequence of the Review of the Friends' Trust Fund Deed, the Council and the Trustees decided to seek to have the Deed amended to allow for an increase in the number of Trustees from three to five, together with some related changes including provision for future amendment. Rigby Cooke Lawyers have been engaged to progress the proposed amendments through the necessary legal processes.

Following conclusion of the review of office procedures by John Goodwin the facilities at Gate Lodge were upgraded and volunteers with the requisite experience were sought through advertisements in *Botanic*

News. As a result a major restructuring of the office was completed with volunteers now undertaking some of the reception, archiving, accounting and general administrative tasks previously done by the Friends' office staff. Our thanks are due to all those who volunteered to assist in the Friends' office and in particular to Bronwen Merrett whose contribution has been invaluable. Appreciation is also extended to staff members, Virginia Henderson, Helen Fahey and Jackie Courmadias for their patience and assistance during the upgrading of the office facilities.

Finance

The Friends provide financial support to the Royal Botanic Gardens Melbourne from two sources: The Friends' operations and the Trust Fund. The complete audited financial statements for the Friends' operations for the year ended 30 June 2008 are at pages 11 to 17.

The Friends' operations for the year yielded a surplus of \$41,047 after a surplus of \$80,776 for 2006/7. The two years are not directly comparable as 2006/7 had benefited from the biennial Botanical Illustration Exhibition Sale which yielded some \$236,000 in revenue. The Exhibition aside, most segments of the Friends' operations improved in 2007/8 with incomes increasing quite strongly relative to 2006/7 (See the Income Statement).

Although inflation has been a continuing concern, the annual increase in recurring running costs for the year 2007/8 has been moderate. However, some significant one-off expenditures were incurred during the year including the painting of Gate Lodge (\$5,300) and legal costs (\$5,000) for the Trust Fund Review.

During the year a review of office processes, systems and equipment found that office systems and layouts had not changed for nearly two decades and that computer systems were out of date, operating inefficiently and to the detriment of membership services. As a result, investment of \$4,500 in computers, software and networks as well as \$4,000 in furniture was undertaken.

The Friends' Balance Sheet at 30 June 2008 showed Members' Funds totalling \$206,014 compared with \$222,673 at 30 June 2007. Current Assets (mostly cash) stood at \$221,739 at 30 June 2008, compared with \$246,358 at the end of 2006/7. The financial position is sound, and the resources available are adequate to meet the ongoing needs of the Friends.

Grants to the Royal Botanic Gardens

Grants to the Gardens are funded from the surpluses from the Friends' operations and from the Trust Fund. In order to improve co-ordination between the Council and the Trustees a new standing committee, the Grants Committee, was established by Council in February 2008. The committee is convened by the President and includes the Secretary, Treasurer and the three Trustees. The committee considers requests for grants referred by the Council and determines the availability and sources of grant funding for the year.

For the year ended 30 June 2008 grants approved or provided for totalled \$149,705 and the projects are shown in the table below. In addition, following a change in the RBG's priorities a grant for irrigation of the Vireya Bed was transferred with Council approval to fund the establishment of the Rare and Threatened Species Bed.

Project	Value \$	Funding Source	Project status	Paid or provided for ⁽²⁾
General Purposes	6,500	Friends' Ops	Completed	Paid
General Purposes	6,500	Friends' Ops	Completed	Paid
Staff Scholarship (2007/08) ⁽¹⁾	10,640	Friends' Ops	Completed	Paid
Ornamental Lake Outlet ⁽²⁾	25,000	Trust Fund	Completed	Not paid
Misting system for Fern Gully ⁽²⁾	52,000	Trust Fund	Completed	Not paid
Purchase of art work (2008/09) ⁽²⁾	5,000	Friends' Ops	Incomplete	Not paid
Staff Scholarship (2008/09) ⁽²⁾	10,000	Friends' Ops	Incomplete	Not paid
Growing Friends' Grouse House ⁽²⁾	34,065	Friends' Ops	Completed	Not paid
Total	\$149,705			

⁽¹⁾The Staff Scholarship Grant was approved in 2006/07 as an ongoing annual award.

⁽²⁾These grants will be paid early in the new financial year.

Trust Fund

Joint efforts by Council and the Trustees to update the Friends' Declaration of Trust, originally made in 1986, are noted elsewhere in this Report, as is the creation of the Grants Committee.

During the year to 30 June 2008 the Trustees received the balance of the bequest of the late Helen McLellan, consisting of cash and shares. As the total value was in excess of \$2,000,000 the Trustees sought

advice from several fund managers who were willing to manage the assets of the Trust Fund and decided to invite USB Wealth Management to undertake that task. This they have done since December 2007 in exemplary fashion. At 30 June 2008 the Fund's assets were valued at \$2,667,432. This sum included a second bequest of \$10,000 from the late Yvonne Knight.

The Trustees, in consultation with the Council, propose to apply part of the income of the Trust Fund to purposes suggested from time to time by the Gardens' Director and Chief Executive and agreed to by the Grants Committee. In addition, some of the income will be used to provide scholarships to members of the staff of the Royal Botanic Gardens Board who apply for assistance in their pursuit of relevant studies. The balance of the income, unless otherwise earmarked, will be used to maintain the value of the assets, having regard to the effect of inflation.

Operations Committee

The Operations Committee continued to meet during the year on alternate months to the Council. It is convened by Vice-President, Catherine Trinca. The Committee's membership includes the Conveners of each of the Friends' committees, the Secretary and Treasurer and two senior RBG staff members. During the year Council determined to also invite representatives of the Volunteer Guides and the Plant Craft Cottage to join the Committee as a means of improving co-operation and co-ordination between the voluntary groups in the Gardens.

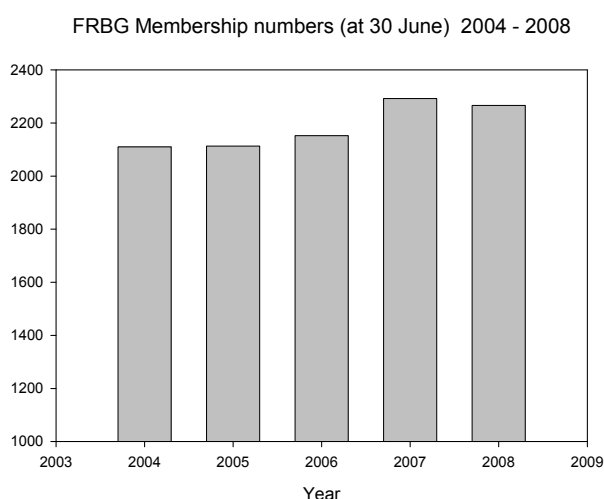
The Operations Committee is a hands-on committee where representatives of the various committees and groups can meet and discuss their day to day programs, activities and events. It also provides a valuable communication link with the Royal Botanic Gardens at an operational level and is a forum where innovations and ideas can be discussed. When appropriate, recommendations are made to Council for consideration.

The Committee acknowledges the contribution made by the Royal Botanic Gardens staff – Rob Packer, Samara Almeleh, Alison Hood, Luke Saffigna, Steve Clancy, Emmalee Bell, Tina Price and Anna Francis, and by Scott Kerr of the Voluntary Guides and Judy Brown of the Plant Craft Cottage.

Membership

The chart below shows membership growth over recent years. At the end of the year membership stood at 2266 after reaching a peak of 2368 in February – the highest level in the life of the Friends. On an end-year to end-year comparison total membership fell slightly by 26, the majority being Student members who failed to renew after 12 months. A small reduction of Household Memberships was partly offset by an increase in Individual Members.

Some 309 new members joined the Friends during the year, with the largest growth in numbers occurring during the Spring and Summer months when the Friends' promotional activities are most intense. Membership renewals also remained healthy. A trial telephone follow-up of non-renewals indicated financial considerations as the main reason for discontinuing membership and more extensive follow-up is planned over the coming months. Membership numbers by category are shown in the table.



MEMBERSHIP NUMBERS		
	Numbers	Numbers
Membership	as at	as at
Type	30/06/07	30/06/08
Individual	991	996
Household	674	662
Country	206	201
Interstate	51	50
Overseas	9	9
Pensioner	200	200
Student	25	12
Life	117	117
Honorary Life	17	17
Group	2	2
Total	2292	2266

Publicity and Promotion

The Friends' publicity and promotion activities are important means of attracting new Members, raising community awareness about the Gardens and informing Members about activities and events.

The primary vehicle of communication with members is our full colour *Botanic News* where there is detailed information about the Friends and about forthcoming activities and events. The quarterly newsletter is

also circulated to the public libraries in the major council localities surrounding the Gardens, along with flyers for individual events and lists of main dates. Old copies of *Botanic News* are also distributed at Friends' promotional stands

The expanded Friends' website at www.rbgfriendsmelbourne.org has a number of pages with information about the Friends' activities and events, plus downloadable application, renewal and booking forms. We also publicise our activities and events as much as possible in the media, both national and local, print media as well as radio. Flyers for events are sent also to the Friends of Cranbourne, Burnley and Geelong Botanic Gardens for display. Information about events is also put onto the websites www.vicnet.net.au and www.global-garden.com.au. The RBG Visitor Centre stocks our flyers and membership application forms. A changing display of A3 posters on one of the foyer pods at the Centre provides information about the Friends as well as publicity for various events. We also have a presence in the RBG's *What's On* publicity and in *Floreo*, the Gardens' magazine.

The Friends also set up promotional displays at events in Mueller Hall, at the RBG's Markets in the Garden, the ABC Gardening Show, the Melbourne International Flower and Garden Show and at the National Gallery of Victoria during the 'Highgrove' lectures.

Through all of the above we publicise our events as well as promoting the benefits of membership of the Friends. Current Members can help by giving Gift Memberships to their friends and family members, or by telling interested people about the benefits of supporting the Gardens by joining the Friends.

Events

The responsibility of the Events Committee is to organise events of interest to the Members, including talks, day and longer trips, walks in the Gardens, a Christmas celebration and other suitable functions. Regular quarterly events include Insiders' Walks, Rambles, Guided Nursery Visits and Talking Plants mornings. A small number of talks are arranged in conjunction with the Australian Garden History Society and the Garden Plant Conservation Association of Australia (formerly Ornamental Plant Collections Association of Australia). The Committee also organises two 'Welcomes for New Members' each year as a way of introducing new Members to the Friends and to those behind the scenes. A highlight of the year was the tri-lecture series on 'Highgrove' presented by David Howard, Head Gardener to HRH the Prince of Wales. The series was presented in co-operation with the Friends of the Gardens, Sydney and attracted over 560 Members and guests. The exclusive Friends' tour to Greece – 'A Plant Odyssey' was also highly successful. During the year to 30 June there was a full and interesting programme of activities as follows:

Illustrated Talks

Sarah Guest	Gardening in a Drought
Caroline Davies and David Martin	Greece, a Plant Odyssey: Corfu/Epirus/Meteora/Delphi
Charles Quest-Ritson(UK) and Rick Darke(USA)	Meet the Authors
Professor David Cantrill	Antarctica: History of the Ice Sheet
Teena Crawford	Canadian Gardens
Dean Nicolle	Eucalypts of Victoria and Tasmania
David Howard, Head Gardener to HRH the Prince of Wales	Highgrove Series: Highgrove the Garden, The Philosophy of Highgrove and A Personal Insight
Katie Holmes, Susan K. Martin and Kylie Mirmohamadi	Reading the Garden
John Patrick, Landscape Architect	Gardens of Normandy
Attilla Kapitany	Australian Succulent Plants
Tegan Abbott	The Magic of Eucalyptus
Professor Marjory Dore Martin	Linnaeus, The Father of Taxonomy

Trips and Tours

Up The (Maribyrnong) Creek October /November 2007	<i>Riverscapes of The West: Day trip up the Maribyrnong R iver Gardens, Art and Houses of the Southern Highlands</i>
May 2008	<i>Greece - A Plant Odyssey</i>

Other

Insiders' Walks:	Spring: Government House Gardens Summer: Insiders' Quarterly Walk: Billabong to Rain Garden Autumn: Insiders' Quarterly Walk: Walk Around the Lake Winter: Guided Visit to RBG Nursery
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- Fit Friends Rambles: Walking the Convict Road, Williamstown
Heide Museum of Modern Art
Outer Circle Railway and the Streets of Canterbury
City and Town Hall
- Talking Plants: Winter : Hellebores
Spring : Bulbs
Summer: Summer Success in Your Garden
Autumn: Autumn Floral Arrangements
- Other: Quarterly Guided visits to Growing Friends' Nursery
Winter Feast of Films Video Morning at Melbourne Grammar School
Christmas Cocktail Party at Gardens House
Herbarium Tours
Guided tour of *Hidden in Plain View: the Forgotten Flora* with Theresa Lebel, Curator

Volunteers comprising the Events Committee are: Susie Brookes (Convener), Anna Denton, Catherine Drew, Judy Dunster, Judy Hajdu, Geoff Hardy, Christine Harris, Helen Johnson, Jennifer le Plastrier, Virginia Morrison, Pam Osborn, Robyn Robins, Rhonda Sinclair, Judy Trenberth, Cathy Trinca, Robyn Tymms.

Catering

The Catering Group continued to provide delectable food for functions organised by the Friends. Re-registration under the Melbourne City Council Food Safety Program ensures the group maintains its compliance with food safety regulations. Functions were held in Mueller Hall, Domain House and Gate Lodge. In addition to the usual events, the Catering Group catered for the 20th Anniversary of the Growing Friends.

Under Convener Pauline Morrison the team comprised: Elizabeth Burchell, Phyllis Dadley-Moore, Gabrielle Endacott, Bridget Evans, Carrol Farmer, Marg Goodall, Elisa Goodwin, Melanie Gribble, Claire Hill, Rosemary Kiellerup, Elfie Lawrence, Terry Lawrence, Lorraine Mack, Margot McDonald, Jo McGrath, Phyl McLean, Penny Noonan, Rosia Pasteur, Merrill Shulkes, Margaret Stokans and Margo Stubbs.

Publications

Contributions to our quarterly *Botanic News* continue at a level that means the continuity of regular articles can no longer be counted on because of space constraints. The enthusiasm and interest of contributors, including those who submit unsolicited work, has helped to raise the standard of the newsletter. It reflects our commitment to the Gardens which we are supporting, our commitment to communication with our members and our commitment to dissemination of interesting and relevant information. Our thanks to all those who have given so generously of their time to help *Botanic News* maintain its interest and to those who have so willingly shared their photographs to help illustrate articles and events.

The Friends' Calendars continue to excite interest. The 2008 themed calendar featured the *Oaks Florilegium*, a beautiful collection of paintings of some of the 450 varieties of Oaks extant, of which the RBG holds more than 30 different species. The 2009 calendar will feature a varied selection of artwork from the Friends' *Illustrated Garden* series and deserves a place in all our homes. It is available from the Friends' office. Our thanks to the artists and volunteers who gave so unstintingly of their time to ensure the success of these calendars, particularly graphic artist Eleonora Ilari for her help in overcoming some difficulties with production.

The refurbishment of the Friends' office has greatly improved conditions for the production of our publications; we now have a dedicated computer in a room separate from the general office.

The Friends are indebted to our Editor and Publications Convener, Meg Miller, and to those volunteers, particularly Pat Williams, who are still interested to proof read the publications – an exacting task requiring great concentration. Even after eight or nine pairs of eyes have scanned the text, errors sometimes still creep through. These publications could not reach their current standard without the patience, humour and co-operation of the Friends' office staff, particularly Helen Fahey who continues to act as editorial support.

Our thanks also go to the staff of the Gardens for their generosity in sharing their time, information and facilities. Without this partnership, the newsletter would not be able to provide its current level of service, nor the calendar images be reproduced at such a high standard.

Growing Friends

The major event in the year of the Growing Friends was the renovation and re-organisation of the working areas of the Nursery. The end result has been a new office building and an enlarged and relocated potting area and a water tank to supplement our watering system.

The project started on time on 19 May, and finished two weeks later. The Growing Friends resumed work on Friday 6 June.

The project was very professionally managed by Pam Eames, our former convener, and Estelle Redlich, a valued member and, conveniently, a Landscape Architect. They had great support from Stephen Paterson and Colin Walker from RBG Infrastructure and Laurie Zarafa, Lou Maiorino and Greg Liroso, from RBG Maintenance. The building surveyor was Peter Shaw, who was generous in his fee reduction. A water tank was donated and installed by PJT Plumbing.

Over the summer of 2007/08 the RBG Maintenance team, overseen by Peter Symes, Senior Curator, Horticulture, rebuilt our automatic spray water system. This has led to a substantial reduction in the amount of water used in the Nursery. In the 12 months to 30/06/08 we used only 581ML, as against 836ML in the 12 months to 30/06/07.

The Spring Plant Sale was held on 13/14 October 2007 and the Autumn Sale on 13/14 April 2008. The 20th Anniversary of the creation of the Growing Friends was celebrated with a lunch party on 29 February 2008. Many past members and helpers were able to attend, along with present members, Friends Council members, and Botanic Gardens staff.

Following is a list of the members of the Growing Friends and their responsibilities as at 30 June 2008. Ian Alexander (membership and rosters/climbers), Don Allison (infrastructure), Pauline Aw, Rosemary Ball (camellias), Lydia Bartlett, Sharon Beaman (sarracenias and hydrangeas), Joyce Cameron (treasurer), June Cherrey, Jan Cheyne (OHS), Hannah Dibella (vireyas), Pam Eames (CBD), Sandi Edlin (bulbs), Linda Floyd (natives), Michael Hare (photos), Wendy Henderson (hostas), Mary Hicks, Juliana Horsfall (convener), Roz Jones (publicity and small perennials), Peter Kelly (purchasing and trees), Gillian Kirk (seedlings), Robyn Leszczynski (nursery manager), Prue Madsen (library and raffle), Meg Miller (grey perennials), Virginia Morrison, Estelle Redlich (project manager), Allison Sarkies (bromeliads), Ann Sinha, Dorothy Smith (succulents), Pamela Smith (herbs), Sue Spicer, Lucille Strachan (tall perennials), Bev Teague (raffle), Carolyn Tomkins (plant selections) and Catherine Watson.

Botanical Illustrators

Based in the Whirling Room Studio in the Great Melbourne Telescope Building, the botanical illustrators meet every Tuesday to paint and to exchange ideas. Many activities were held during the year including:

- 11 September 2007: Participation in an Aboriginal Heritage Walk in the Royal Botanic Gardens.
- 9 October 2007: Meeting with Rita Parkinson about project to paint the Eucalypts of the RBG by the Botanical Illustrators as part of *The Illustrated Garden* project.
- 4 December 2007: A talk by Iona Christianson, followed by a shared Christmas lunch.
- 11 March 2008: Talk by Rita Parkinson on Tempera Painting on Gesso Board followed by a demonstration of the method used.
- 10 June 2008: Talk by John Nicholas of the Voluntary Guides on 'The Eucalypts in the RBG' followed by a discussion of major issues with artists' progress painting some of them.

Following the success of the 2007 calendar, the Calendar Sub-Committee produced another for 2008 using paintings of the Oaks of the Botanic Gardens by the illustrators. These paintings are held in the Library at the National Herbarium. This venture realised \$3,725.

The 2007 Christmas card featured detail from Marta Salamon's painting of *Corymbia ficifolia*. Sales realised \$3,383.

Classes and Workshops:

Dianne Emery and Mali Moir conducted four terms of day and evening classes in botanical illustration for an average 96 students per term. A new class on Saturday mornings was introduced in October 2007. The following workshops were conducted:

- 4-day beginners' Workshop - Dianne Emery
- Drawing Workshop - Dianne Emery
- Vellum Workshop - Mali Moir
- Plant Dissection and Microscope Workshop - Mali Moir
- Insect Illustration Workshop - Kate Nolan.

Helping Hands

The Helping Hands project was initiated by Past President Irwin Newman to provide the opportunity for those Friends who wanted to volunteer for a 'hands-on' activity of assistance to the Gardens. At 8.00am on 1 August 2007, Helping Hands volunteers met Michael McNabb, Manager Horticulture, and Therese Turner, Co-ordinator Gardens South, to commence the Gardens induction program for volunteers. During this session the task for the volunteers to refurbish and maintain the gardens of E Gate Lodge was outlined. There was an emphasis on teamwork, self-direction and involvement in redesign of the Lodge garden. Since then the volunteers have been assembling at E Gate Lodge every second Wednesday with the usual exceptions. Over the

year the membership of the group has changed; the required number of six to seven has been achieved. There is now a waiting list of volunteers.

The initial work was the hard yakka, heavy pruning, weeding, removing unsightly and unwanted plants, removing what seemed to be hectares (acres) of matted ficus (Moreton Bay Fig) roots before preparing the beds for planting. The selection of plants and the design of the garden were reviewed with Andrew Laidlaw, RBG Landscape Architect. The front and part of the roadside garden have been planted. The remainder of the garden is still to be refurbished after the design is finalized, which is the current task.

Information Technology and Equipment

The FRBG computer network has been extensively upgraded under guidance of Vice-President, Dr Richard Kirsner as part of the Gate Lodge office refit.

All the desktop computers have been either replaced or upgraded and a new high-speed networked printer and high quality scanner have been purchased. An upgraded backup system has been installed. The networked computers are now equipped with Microsoft Office 2007 software. All the computers have internet access, and have anti-virus, anti-spam and anti-spyware software installed.

Botanic News is now produced using a high-speed dedicated computer and both the imaging and desktop publishing software have been upgraded during the year.

The Friends' Membership database has been completely remodelled and now includes Events – an innovation which has contributed to increased time-efficient accuracy in record-keeping. The new database provides a more accurate picture of the demographics of the membership.

Volunteers

Some 225 Members were active in the volunteer group this year after a volunteer recruitment exercise conducted by John Goodwin. Volunteers work in every area of the Friends' operations and make a major contribution to the smooth running of the organisation. Our volunteers also helped with other events including the Melbourne Club Open Garden Day, the Commonwealth's 'Hidden from Plain View' exhibition and at Markets in the Gardens. We extend appreciative thanks to all.

Two volunteers have retired from regular commitments in the Friends' office, namely Rosemary McMeekin (15 years) and Joan Murphy (10 years), although both Rosemary and Joan continue to assist with the mailing of *Botanic News*. Special thanks for their time and effort over the years.

At the Annual General Meeting in November 2007 eight Members were presented with Voluntary Service Award badges:

25 Year Award: Lawrence Cohn and Louise Coronel

15 Year Award: Isobel Allan, Heather Ironmonger, Judy Jarman and Phyl McLean

10 Year Award: Virginia Morrison and June Cherrey.

During the year a refurbishment of the Friends' office was undertaken, giving a more organised working area for everyone. This would not have been possible without the hard work of the staff involved: Virginia, Helen and Jackie, along with Meg Miller and numerous other volunteers. We thank them for their extra efforts.

Significant Events since 30 June 2008

The Council is of the opinion that the solvency and viability of the Friends are not now nor in the foreseeable future likely to be affected by adverse circumstances.

**FRIENDS OF THE ROYAL BOTANIC GARDENS,
MELBOURNE INC.
Registered No: A12817T**

**INDEPENDENT AUDIT REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF
FRIENDS OF THE ROYAL BOTANIC GARDENS, MELBOURNE INCORPORATED
Registered No. A12817T**

SCOPE

We have audited the accompanying financial report, being a special purpose financial report of the Friends of the Royal Botanic Gardens, Melbourne Inc, which comprises the balance sheet as at 30 June 2008, the income statement and the cash flow statement, a summary of significant accounting policies, other explanatory notes and the statement by council.

COUNCIL'S RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE FINANCIAL REPORT

The Council is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial report and has determined that the accounting policies described in Note 1 to the financial statements, which form part of the financial report, are consistent with the financial requirements of the Associations Incorporation Act (Vic) 1981 and are appropriate to meet the needs of the members. The Council's responsibilities also include establishing and maintaining internal control relevant to the preparation and fair presentation of the financial report that is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error; selecting and applying appropriate accounting policies; and making accounting estimates that are reasonable in the circumstances.

AUDITOR'S RESPONSIBILITY

Our responsibility is to express an opinion on the financial report based on our audit. No opinion is expressed as to whether the accounting policies used, as described in Note 1, are appropriate to meet the needs of the members. We conducted our audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards. These auditing standards require that we comply with relevant ethical requirements relating to audit engagements and plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance whether the financial report is free from material misstatement.

An audit involves performing procedures to obtain audit evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial report. The procedures selected depend on the auditor's judgement, including the assessment of the risks of material misstatement of the financial report, whether due to fraud or error. In making those risk assessments, the auditor considers internal control relevant to the entity's preparation and fair presentation of the financial report in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the entity's internal control. An audit also includes evaluating the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates made by the council, as well as evaluating the overall presentation of the financial report.

The financial report has been prepared for distribution to members for the purpose of fulfilling the Council's financial reporting under the Associations Incorporation Act (Vic) 1981. We disclaim any assumption of responsibility for any reliance on this report or on the financial report to which it relates to any person other than the members, or for any purpose other than that for which it was prepared.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our audit opinion.

INDEPENDENCE

In conducting our audit, we have complied with the independence requirements of Australian professional ethical pronouncements.

AUDIT OPINION

In our opinion, the financial report of the Friends of the Royal Botanic Gardens Melbourne Inc. presents a true and fair view, in all material respects the financial position of the Friends of the Royal Botanic Gardens Melbourne Inc. as of 30 June 2008 and of its financial performance for the year then ended in accordance with the accounting policies described in Note 1 to the financial statements.

BAUMGARTNER PARTNERS
Chartered Accountants

DAVID K BAUMGARTNER
Partner
Dated the 6th day of October 2008

Melbourne

**FRIENDS OF THE ROYAL BOTANIC GARDENS,
MELBOURNE INCORPORATED
Registered No: A12817T**

STATEMENT BY COUNCIL

The Council has determined that the Friends of the Royal Botanic Gardens, Melbourne Inc. is not a reporting entity as the members can obtain information they require without examining general purpose financial reports. The Council has also determined that this special purpose financial report should be prepared in accordance with the accounting policies outlined in Note 1 to the financial statements.

In the opinion of the Council:

1. the financial report set out on the following pages, presents a true and fair view of the financial position of the Friends of the Royal Botanic Gardens, Melbourne Inc. as at 30 June 2008 and its performance for the year ended on that date and;
2. at the date of this statement, there are reasonable grounds to believe the Friends of the Royal Botanic Gardens, Melbourne Inc. will be able to pay its debts as and when they fall due.

This statement is made in accordance with a resolution of the Council, and is signed for and on behalf of the Council by:

Janet Thomson
President

Maurice Castro
Treasurer

Dated this 22nd day of October 2008

**INCOME STATEMENT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2008**

	Note	2008	2007
Income		\$	\$
Sale of plants		41,600	42,735
Sale of goods		9,106	5,615
Classes and workshops		90,201	78,628
Functions and excursions		62,988	28,804
Membership subscriptions		69,755	68,051
Exhibition revenue		5,290	236,062
Other revenue		30,904	27,073
Interest Income		12,991	10,156
		<u>322,834</u>	<u>497,124</u>
Expenditure			
Employment expenses		(124,875)	(121,459)
Exhibition expenses		(199)	(186,748)
Functions and excursions expense		(33,862)	(11,021)
Botanic News		(14,960)	(14,799)
Classes and workshop expenses		(29,171)	(21,894)
Printing, stationery and postage		(14,569)	(15,087)
Growing Friends expenses		(9,117)	(10,323)
Plant sale expenses		(1,502)	(805)
Audit fees		(3,442)	(3,508)
Bank Charges		(3,842)	(3,322)
Depreciation		(5,157)	(1,978)
Insurance		(2,378)	(2,385)
Repairs and Maintenance - equipment		(8,404)	(1,203)
Other expenses from ordinary activities		(30,311)	(21,816)
		<u>(281,787)</u>	<u>(416,348)</u>
Profit before income tax and distributions to RBG	2	41,047	80,776
Income tax expense	1(a)	0	0
Profits after income tax		<u>41,047</u>	<u>80,776</u>
RETAINED PROFITS AT THE BEGINNING OF THE FINANCIAL YEAF	8	222,673	148,897
Less distribution to Royal Botanic Gardens Melbourne		(57,705)	(7,000)
RETAINED PROFITS AT THE END OF THE FINANCIAL YEAR		<u>206,014</u>	<u>222,673</u>

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements

BALANCE SHEET AS AT 30 JUNE 2008

	Note	2008 \$	2007 \$
CURRENT ASSETS			
Cash assets	3	215,927	240,282
Receivables	4	5,812	6,076
TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS		221,739	246,358
NON-CURRENT ASSETS			
Property, plant and equipment	5	16,251	8,856
TOTAL NON-CURRENT ASSETS		16,251	8,856
TOTAL ASSETS		237,989	255,213
CURRENT LIABILITIES			
Payables	6	21,888	23,297
Provisions	7	10,087	9,244
TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES		31,975	32,541
TOTAL LIABILITIES		31,975	32,541
NET ASSETS		206,014	222,673
MEMBERS' FUNDS			
Accumulated funds	8	206,014	222,673
MEMBERS' FUNDS		206,014	222,673

CASH FLOW STATEMENT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2008

	Note	2008 \$	2,007 \$
CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES			
Receipts from members and customers		310,525	485,026
Payments to suppliers and employees		(277,196)	(363,175)
Interest received		12,573	9,277
Donations to Royal Botanic Gardens, Melbourne		(57,705)	(7,000)
Net cash provided by/ (used in) operating activities		(11,804)	124,127
CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES			
Fixed asset purchases		(12,552)	(5,068)
Investment asset purchases			(50,000)
Proceeds on sale of fixed assets			
Net Cash provided by/(used in) investing activities		(12,552)	(55,068)
CASH FLOWS FROM FINANCING ACTIVITIES			
		-	-
Net increase/(decrease) in cash held		(24,355)	69,059
Cash at the beginning of the financial year		240,282	171,223
Cash at the end of the financial year	10(a)	215,927	240,282

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements

FRIENDS OF THE ROYAL BOTANIC GARDENS, MELBOURNE INC.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2008

NOTE 1: STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES

This financial report is a special purpose financial report prepared in order to satisfy the financial reporting requirements of the Associations Incorporation Act (Vic). The Council has determined that the Friends of the Royal Botanic Gardens Melbourne Inc (the Friends) is not a reporting entity.

The financial report has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Associations Incorporation Act (Vic) and the following Australian Standards:

AASB 112: Income Taxes

AASB 1031: Materiality

AASB 108: Accounting Policies, Changes in Accounting Estimates and Error

AASB 110: Events after the Balance Sheet Date

AASB 117: Leases

AASB 107: Cash Flow Statements

AASB 101: Presentation of Financial Statements

AASB 116: Property, Plant and Equipment

AASB 118: Revenue

No other applicable Australian Accounting Standards, Australian Accounting Interpretations or other authoritative pronouncements of the Australian Accounting Standards Board have been applied.

The financial report is prepared on an accrual basis and is based on historic costs, and does not take into account changing money values or, except where specifically stated, current valuations of non-current assets.

The following material accounting policies, which are consistent with the previous period, unless otherwise stated, have been adopted in the preparation of this financial report:

(a) Income Tax

The Friends is a non-profit association exempt from income tax under Section 50-10 of the Income Tax Assessment Act 1997.

(b) Fixed Assets

Each class of property, plant and equipment is carried at cost less, where applicable, any accumulated depreciation.

The depreciable amount of all fixed assets is depreciated over the useful life of the asset to the Friends commencing from the time the asset is held ready for use.

(c) Employee Entitlements

Provision is made for the Friends' liability for employee entitlements arising from services rendered by employees to balance date. Employee entitlements expected to be settled within one year together with entitlements arising from wages and salaries, annual leave and sick leave that will be settled after one year have been measured at the nominal amount. Other employee entitlements payable later than one year have been measured at the present value of the estimated future cash outflows to be made for those entitlements.

Contributions are made by the Friends to an employee superannuation fund and are charged as an expense when incurred. The Friends have no legal obligation to provide benefits to employees on retirement.

(d) Revenue

Revenue from the sale of goods is recognised upon delivery of goods to customers.

Revenue from the rendering of services is recognised upon the delivery of the service to customers and members.

Membership revenue is recognised on an accrual basis.

Interest revenue is recognised on a proportional basis taking into account the interest rates applicable to the financial asset.

Other revenue is brought to account as income on an accrual basis.

(e) Unearned Revenue

Membership revenue that is received before balance date and related to the subsequent financial year is brought to account as a liability.

(f) Cash

For the purposes of the Cash Flow Statement, cash includes cash on hand, at bank and on deposit, less bank overdrafts.

(g) Comparative figures

Where required, comparative figures have been adjusted to conform with changes in presentation for the current financial year.

(h) Goods and Services Tax (GST)

Revenues, expenses and assets are recognised net of the amount of GST, except where the amount of GST incurred is not recoverable from the Australian Tax Office. In these circumstances, the GST is recognised as part of the cost of acquisition of the asset or as part of an item of the expense. Receivables and payables in the Statement of Financial Position are shown inclusive of GST.

	2008	2007
	\$	\$

NOTE 2: PROFIT BEFORE INCOME TAX

Profit before income tax has been determined after:

(a) **Expenses**

Depreciation of plant and equipment	5,157	1,978
Remuneration of auditor - audit or review services	3,442	3,508

NOTE 3: CASH ASSETS

Cash on hand	200	200
Cash at bank	13,991	55,711
Cash on deposit	201,736	184,371
	<u>215,927</u>	<u>240,282</u>

NOTE 4: RECEIVABLES

Accrued Income	5,224	4,806
Sundry Debtors	588	1,270
	<u>5,812</u>	<u>6,076</u>

NOTE 5: PROPERTY, PLANT AND EQUIPMENT

Plant and equipment at cost	40,136	48,034
Less: Accumulated depreciation	(23,885)	(39,178)
	<u>16,251</u>	<u>8,856</u>

(a) **Movements in carrying amounts**

Movement in the carrying amounts for each class of property, plant and equipment between the beginning and the end of the financial year is detailed below:

	Plant and Equipment	Total
	\$	\$
Balance at beginning of year	8,856	8,856
Additions	12,552	12,552
Disposals	(541)	(541)
Depreciation expense	(4,616)	(4,616)
Carrying amount at the end of the year	<u>16,251</u>	<u>16,251</u>

NOTE 6: PAYABLES

CURRENT

Subscriptions received in advance	13,843	14,266
Sundry creditors and accruals	8,045	9,031
	<u>21,888</u>	<u>23,297</u>

	2008	2007
	\$	\$

NOTE 7: PROVISIONS

CURRENT

Provision for employee annual leave	3,663	3,048
Provision for employee sick leave	6,424	6,196

Total provision for employee entitlements	<u>10,087</u>	<u>9,244</u>
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Number of employees at year end	<u>4</u>	<u>4</u>
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NOTE 8: ACCUMULATED FUNDS

Accumulated funds at the beginning of the financial year	222,673	148,897
Surplus (deficit) attributable to the Friends	41,047	80,776
Less distribution to the Royal Botanic Gardens, Melbourne	(57,705)	(7,000)
Accumulated funds at the end of the financial year	<u>206,014</u>	<u>222,673</u>

NOTE 9: RELATED PARTY TRANSACTIONS

Grants paid to the Royal Botanic Gardens, Melbourne	57,705	7,000
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NOTE 10: CASH FLOW INFORMATION**(a) Reconciliation of cash**

Cash on hand	200	200
Cash at bank	13,991	55,711
Cash on deposit	201,736	184,371
	<u>215,927</u>	<u>240,282</u>

(b) The Friends have no credit stand-by or financing facilities in place

(c) There were no non-cash financing or investing activities during the period

NOTE 11: ROUNDING

The sum of the components may not add up to the total due to rounding.

NOTE 12: ASSOCIATION DETAILS

The Friends is incorporated under the Associations Incorporation Act (Vic) and is domiciled in Australia.

The registered office and principal place of business is:

FRIENDS OF THE ROYAL BOTANIC GARDENS, MELBOURNE INC.

Gate Lodge, 100 Birdwood Avenue

MELBOURNE VIC 3004