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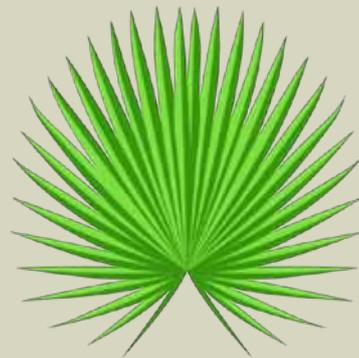
AAFBG NEWSLETTER

NO 53 NOVEMBER 2019

Australian Association of
Friends of Botanic
Gardens

Biennial Conference

May 22nd - 24th 2020



2020 Banks and Solander
Friends Celebrating 250 Years



Hosted by

The Friends of Brisbane Botanic gardens
and Sherwood Arboretum

Brisbane Botanic Gardens

Mt Coot-tha

Friends Celebrating 250 years

Celebrating the botanical wonders of 1770s exploration and the influence on the botanical knowledge and the use of Australian and South Pacific tropical and sub-tropical flora. Banks' and Solander's legacy of botanical research and what we could claim as the first 'Botanic Gardens Friend'

Logo represents *Livistona australis*- the first plant identified offshore at Batemans Bay by Banks that grows from northern Victoria to FNQ.

Australian Association of Friends of Botanic Gardens

Incorporation: AOO26805Z

Patron: Dr Philip Moors

Office bearers

President: Wayne Harvey, Friends Waite Arboretum

Vice-President: Murray Fletcher Friends Orange BG

Secretary: Position vacant

Treasurer: Kathy Wright, Friends RBG Melb.

General Committee

Wendy Antoniak, Friends ANBG, Canberra

Elizabeth Baraclough, Friends Eurobodalla RBG

Jill Brownlee, Friends Noosa BG

Elizabeth Gilfillan, Friends Buninyong BG

Annette Irish, Friends Brisbane BG and
Sherwood Arboretum

Warwick Sellens, Friends Ballarat BG

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Membership

Annual Subscriptions are due on 1 April

\$50 for up to 250 members

\$150 for 250-500 members \$250 for 500-

1000 members

\$400 for 1000+ members

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Editors Anne Rawson

email: eucalyptar@gmail.com

We welcome your articles for inclusion and photographs and important calendar events.

Closing dates are 30 March and 30 September approximately six weeks prior to publication.

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The Handbury Award

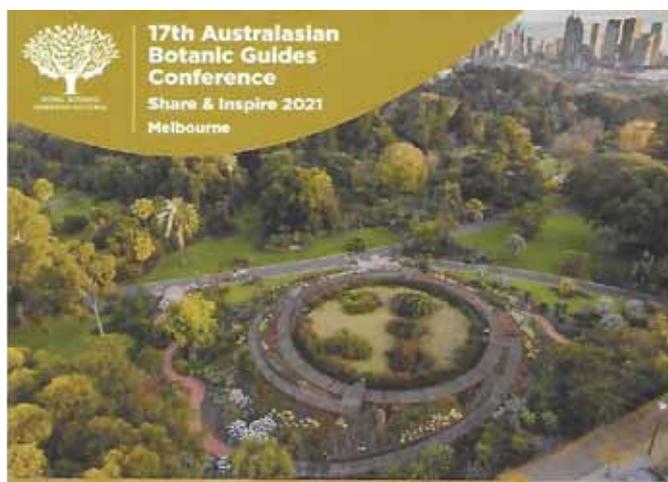
Dr Geoff Handbury AO is an enthusiastic supporter of environmental causes and has a firm belief in the educational role and benefits of botanic gardens to the community. He is interested in the prosperity of botanic gardens Australia-wide and has been a generous benefactor to the Association. The AAFBG Management Committee has agreed that an annual award be named in his honour for a Friends group or individual that has done meritorious work in their garden or community. Nominations for the inaugural Handbury Award will open later this year and AAFBG members are invited to consider those whose contributions during 2019 could be recognised with an Award.

Details and nomination forms are available from the AAFBG and enclosed in this edition of *Eucalypt*.

We need a Secretary

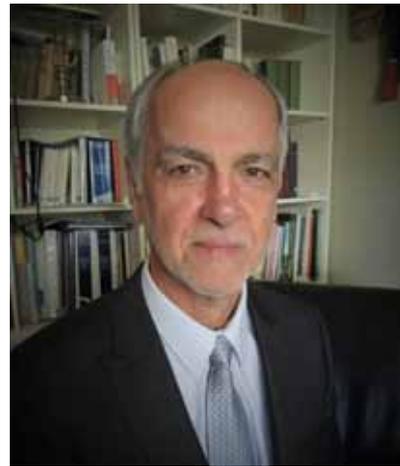
The AAFBG Committee is looking for a new Secretary to take immediate effect. For a position description, go to <https://friendsbotanicgardens.org>. The Secretary is required to attend committee meetings by teleconference four times per year and attend the AGM. The Secretary has the opportunity to contribute to the Association and the benefit of getting to know many AAFBG members. It is not a time-consuming role and does not require specific skills. The Committee already has many people contributing in many ways. The Admin Officer takes care of day-to-day administration tasks. This can be a valuable development activity for someone keen to become more involved in the inner workings of their own organisation. Please consider nominating a member from your group by contacting the President, Wayne Harvey at info@friendsbotanicgardens.org

The next Guides' Conference Melbourne 11-15 October 2021



From the President

Wayne Harvey



The AAFBG's 2019 AGM, held last July in Sydney, resulted in the election of new members to the Management Committee and the re-election of some existing members. The current Management Committee membership covers Friends' groups from NSW, Victoria, Queensland, South Australia and the ACT. Dennis Ayliffe concluded his term as President, and it is my pleasure to present this column to you as your newly appointed President.

I propose to use this column in Eucalypt to keep our members informed about activities of the Committee and to ensure our members gain benefit from their association with the AAFBG. Members can also use Eucalypt as a forum to share ideas or solutions they have found to be useful in their own operations, or to ask questions of the wider Friends' national volunteer network.

AAFBG has initiated the Handbury Award, named in honour of Dr Geoffrey Handbury, a major benefactor of the AAFBG. The Award will recognise exceptional contributions by individuals or organisations to a Garden, Park or Arboretum. Nominations from our member organisations will be invited towards the end of each year and the awardees will be announced at the following AGM.

Some readers would have visited the Melbourne International Flower and Garden Show in 2019 and seen the AAFBG's display stand. The AAFBG Committee saw participation in that event as an opportunity to give our members access to the 100,000 visitors to the Show over a five-day period. After the 2019 success we have decided to continue our involvement and will be participating in the 2020 Show. Several member groups who participated with us in 2019 have already indicated interest in being included next year. All AAFBG members will hear more about this opportunity in coming weeks. The Committee is also keen for the AAFBG to participate in similar major events held each year around the country.

Finally, a reminder of the biennial AAFBG Congress to be held in Brisbane next May. The program has been designed around the explorations and influence of English botanist, Sir Joseph Banks and Swedish naturalist, Daniel Solander, particularly how their discoveries have influenced the use of Australian and South Pacific tropical and sub-tropical flora in horticulture.

The AAFBG has a busy schedule for next year and I look forward to seeing all our member organisations participate in, and gain benefit from, the activities and events. I welcome suggestions and ideas for other ways in which you can develop and grow your own organisation.

Acting-Secretary's Report

Elizabeth Gilfillan



One of the most enriching and pleasurable roles of my life has been as Secretary of AAFBG!

It has given me the opportunity to learn about the botanical garden industry and its people, and the role botanic gardens play in community life, to meet the passionate supporters of their gardens in various capacities, and to learn of the gardens and regions all round Australia and worldwide. It has enabled me to pass on what I have learned to others and to take it all back to my home Ballarat Botanical Gardens.

It is time for someone else to fill the AAFBG Secretary role and to benefit as I have from this fantastic association. I have stepped down and am now only acting Secretary as a representative of Friends of Buninyong Botanical Gardens, of which I have been a member since its inception and to whom I look forward to passing news first hand. I will stay on the Committee and assist the person who takes on the Secretary role.

Rapid changes in technologies, community attitudes and volunteering are revealing a great need to adapt to the times. Friends groups, as advocates for their Gardens, are forming Memorandums of Understanding with Administration and creating Trusts and Foundations to ensure future stability and benefaction.

Looking forward to meeting many more Friends at the exciting forthcoming conference in Brisbane, Friends celebrating 250 years since Banks and Solander came this way.



The AAFBG Annual General Meeting hosted by Foundation & Friends in Sydney was a memorable occasion. Our thanks to CEO Melissa Ellis and Charlotte Sands for facilitating this meeting.



Our best wishes go to Friends of Benalla and Riverine Parkland as they adapt to change and look to their future survival. A plaque to commemorate the 2018 Benalla Conference will soon be installed at the Gardens.



Spring splendour in my home Ballarat Botanical Gardens

Administrative Officer's Report

Ro Noone



Congratulations to members who are celebrating significant milestones this year. According to the Australian National Botanic Gardens' Directory of Australian Botanic Gardens (2016), the following Botanic Gardens (who have a Friends group belonging to AAFBG) have had a "Big 0" birthday this year: Port Fairy Botanic Gardens – 160 years, Camperdown Botanic Gardens – 150 years, St Arnaud Queen Mary Gardens – 130 years, Kyneton Gardens – 160 years, Australian National Botanic Gardens Canberra – 50 years and Australian Inland Botanic Garden, Mildura – 30 years. It is fantastic to know there is such rich botanic heritage existing across the country, giving so much inspiration to our newer parks, gardens and arboreta.

The 2019 AGM was a great success. Reports are available on the AAFBG website under "About Us". The new Committee have met via teleconference on two occasions since July. Future meetings will take place in November, February and April, leading up to our Biennial Conference in Brisbane on 22-24 May 2020.

Annette Irish is an AAFBG Committee member and the Director of Friends of Brisbane BG & Sherwood Arboretum. Together with her team and Friends of Noosa, Maroochydore and Gold Coast, she is developing an exciting program of speakers, tours and entertainment for us. Be sure to make your plans to visit Brisbane at this time and keep an eye on the AAFBG website for more information. A member has kindly donated the cost of three registrations to be offered to smaller AAFBG members with very limited funds.

I am often surprised to hear from Friends of Botanic Gardens that they have not heard of AAFBG. Your group's subscription represents a small part of your members' contribution to your organisation. Here are some helpful tips to illuminate AAFBG's role :

1. display your AAFBG Certificate of Membership
2. include a reference to AAFBG in your newsletters, informing your members that AAFBG is here to advocate for them and facilitate the sharing of news and knowledge amongst Friends groups in Australia and overseas
3. forward the fortnightly *E-ucalypt News* to your membership
4. distribute the biannual newsletter *Eucalypt*
5. encourage your members to refer to the AAFBG website. They can use the list of members to make contact with Friends groups and plan visits to arboreta, botanic parks and gardens while on their travels.

Wishing you all a fruitful spring and bountiful summer in your gardens, parks and arboreta. I look forward to meeting many Friends at the 2020 Conference.

Report on Annual General Meeting

Ro Noone, Administrative Officer

Foundation & Friends Royal Botanic Gardens Sydney hosted the AAFBG Annual General Meeting on 19 July 2019.

Thirty attendees representing 15 Friends groups were welcomed by volunteers serving a delicious morning tea on the Foundation & Friends terrace. The AGM took place in the Maiden Theatre. A message from Patron, Dr Philip Moors, was read and reports were given by the outgoing President, Dennis Ayliffe, the outgoing Secretary, Elizabeth Gilfillan, and the Treasurer, Kathy Wright. These are available on the website: <https://friendsbotanicgardens.org/AboutUs/AnnualGeneralMeeting>

The following members stepped down from Committee and were thanked for their contributions: Dennis Ayliffe (President), John Bentley (Vice-president), Bodo Jensen, Robyn Saunders, Janet O’Hehir, and Trish Keller (Ordinary Committee Members).



Outgoing members of the Executive: John Bentley, Elizabeth Gilfillan and Dennis Ayliffe

New Committee members were elected and the 2019-20 Committee was formed as follows:

President:	Wayne Harvey	Friends of the Waite Arboretum
Vice-president:	Murray Fletcher	Friends of the Orange Botanic Gardens
Treasurer:	Kathy Wright	Friends of the Royal Botanic Gardens Melbourne
Secretary:	Position Vacant	

Ordinary Committee Members:

Wendy Antoniak	Friends of the Australian National Botanic Gardens Canberra
Elizabeth Barraclough	Friends of Eurobodalla Regional Botanic Gardens
Jill Brownlee	Friends of Noosa Botanic Gardens
Elizabeth Gilfillan	Friends of Buninyong Botanic Gardens
Annette Irish	Friends of Brisbane Botanic Gardens & Sherwood Arboretum
Warwick Sellens	Friends of Ballarat Botanic Gardens.

Elizabeth Gilfillan was subsequently appointed Acting Secretary by the new Committee until a Secretary for the 2019-20 term can be appointed.

AGM (continued)

Following the meeting, Melissa Ellis, CEO Foundation & Friends RBG Sydney, spoke about the activities of the organisation, which currently enjoys a membership of around 5,500, including 340 volunteers. Melissa gave some interesting facts and figures illustrating the scope of the Foundation & Friends contribution to RBG Sydney:

- \$35,000 per annum is made available for scholarships for Gardens staff, \$121,000 has been raised for their Rainforest Conservation Appeal, \$635,000 has been raised towards the \$3 million target for Sydney's Herbarium Digitisation Appeal, to record the 1.4 million specimens
- \$463,000 has been raised for their Plant Clinic
- around \$10,000 provided for the Southern African Bed.
- over \$1million to the Calyx.

It also supports numerous exhibitions, such as the annual *Artisans in the Gardens, Botanica* (a biennial botanical illustration exhibition with RBG Melbourne), *Wild Thing*, Art Collections and the New Years' Eve Picnic.

In his role as AAFBG Vice-president, Murray Fletcher introduced Paul Tracey, President of Botanic Gardens Australia & New Zealand, to give an update on BGANZ activities. BGANZ currently has 91 paid members, a 15-member volunteer council and three part-time staff: CEO, Eamonn Flanagan, a Membership Manager and a Communications Manager. They produce a biannual magazine *The Gardener* and have recently introduced Botanic Gardens Day to encourage all botanic gardens to raise their profiles. The 9th BGANZ Congress was held in Wellington, NZ, in October 2019. The 7th BGANZ/BGCI congress will be held in 2021. BGANZ can provide some funding for congress attendance. See more on their website: bganz.org.au

BGANZ has been supporting the BGCi Red List research by reporting on Eucalypts and threatened species. They are also looking at more ways to manage botanic gardens in times of climate change. BGANZ offers assistance particularly to smaller botanic gardens with engagement, education and interpretation. They are looking to provide collections software and training.

Elizabeth Gilfillan provided some background for the Handbury Certificate of Merit. See form attached.

Murray Fletcher gave an overview of the 2020 Conference to be held in Brisbane and hosted by Friends of Brisbane Botanic Gardens & Sherwood Arboretum.

After lunch, Paul Nicholson, Volunteer Co-ordinator, led an educational and entertaining tour of some of RBG Sydney's highlights.

AAFBG wishes to thank Melissa Ellis, CEO and Charlotte Sandes, Marketing and Events Manager of the Foundation & Friends, and staff of the RBG Sydney for organising such a successful and enjoyable day.



Melissa Ellis, CEO Foundation & Friends, talking to Friends.

The benefits of Corporate Friends

Friends of the Australian Arid Lands Botanic Garden (AALBG) Port Augusta, South Australia

Some years ago one of our committee members, Ronda Hall, suggested that we include a category of membership for local businesses. We agreed and she went out and encouraged many local businesses to join the Friends as corporate members. These businesses pay a membership of \$250 annually, January to January. Since then the concept has been widely accepted and we currently have 29 corporate members.

Corporate membership includes one membership card issued in one name by the business. This entitles the holder to discounted meals and other items from the Garden's Bluebush Café; Gift Shop including plant sales area; and free use for the business of the AALBG Meeting Room and facilities once a year. The AALBG management also hosts a "thankyou function" for our corporate members each year, where they can meet staff, other Friends and see and hear about progress and developments. Our members are encouraged to patronise these businesses and to mention that they are Friends. Many of our corporate members promote our Garden and Friends to their customers, both local and visitors, and are valuable ambassadors. Some of them help the Friends and the Garden in other ways as well. This membership money is a significant part of the Friends' income and helps us to develop and maintain the Garden.

Other Friends groups may like to consider establishing a corporate membership category, perhaps varied from our role model, to suit their particular situation. We have found it worthwhile and it gives local businesses the opportunity to be part of what we do, to support the Garden; indeed it gives them a degree of ownership.

The AALBG is the most popular tourist destination in Port Augusta, and it is estimated from federal government regional tourism figures that visitors to the AALBG bring in some \$18,000,000 of tourism revenue to the city each year, which is very significant for a small regional city facing difficult financial times. We have a high rate of travellers passing through Port Augusta as it is one of the cross roads of Australia, where highways from Adelaide, Darwin, Sydney and Perth and some other regional highways meet. If travellers call in at one of our corporate member businesses they may see information on, or even be directed to visit the Garden. Likewise, if travellers visit the Garden we can recommend our corporate members should they need services.

The AALBG has done a great deal to improve the image of Port Augusta, to the extent that it is now becoming known as The Arid Garden City. Our Friends are proud of the AALBG and what it has achieved, and our corporate members are too. Their role as ambassadors for the Garden is valuable and appreciated and we are very pleased to have them as members.

John Zwar, OAM, CF. President.

The AALBG is proudly owned and operated by the Port Augusta City Council.



Beauty rich and rare

Friends of the Australian National Botanic Gardens Canberra, ACT

Thirty volunteer guides from ANBG attended the 16th Australian Botanic Guides Conference 2019, at Kings Park, Perth. Altogether there were 150 conference attendees, with representatives from each state and territory (except the Northern Territory), as well as from Wellington and Christchurch, New Zealand. The theme of the conference was *Beauty rich and rare*, which is a particularly apt description of the flora featured in Kings Park Botanic Gardens and found across Western Australia. WA has almost half of Australia's 25,000 plant species, and two-thirds of these do not occur naturally anywhere else on earth.

Conference participants were welcomed to country by Dr Noel Nannup, who spoke about the pleasure you get from walking on country, the importance of story-telling and the joy you get from discovering something about nature for yourself. We were immediately transfixed, thinking about how we can apply these ideas to our guiding. In the course of the conference we also heard about initiatives to link Aboriginal experience with modern science (explored in a film available on YouTube by Dr Nannup and Professor Hopper *Synergies: Walking Together—Belonging to Country*).

The complementarity of gardens and bushland was also an ongoing theme, reflected in other presentations, in walks through the gardens, and the day excursion to nature reserves further afield. Presentations covered the development and management of the Kings Park Botanic Gardens, including seed collecting and plant breeding and the evolutionary development of this biodiversity hotspot. The southwest is recognised as a global biodiversity hotspot for flora and fauna. The Noongar Aboriginal word 'kwongan' has come into common usage to refer to this floristic region's shrub land vegetation and associated countryside.

The theme of *Beauty rich and rare* came to life – actually larger than life - when the 'Adorable Florables', a group of wildflower characters, turned up at the conference soiree, to our amusement and delight. These characters, who are actually Kings Park Botanic Gardens employees, can be found meandering through the Gardens during the spring festival, entertaining visitors with their lively banksia, bee, kangaroo paw and wattle personalities!



Trish Munro

The conference also provided opportunities to learn from other botanic gardens: the various training, mentoring, planning and operational arrangements used by the different volunteer guide organisations. We could all relate to the highly amusing depiction of flawed and good guiding techniques, highlighted in a training video produced by Kings Park guides.

Overall, the conference was an impressive volunteer achievement: run by volunteers for volunteers. As volunteers we are always learning; and never more so than when learning is part of enjoyable, social activities and on location, in bush or botanic gardens.

Lesley King, Covenor ANBG Volunteer Guides

Three guides go travelling

Friends of Ballarat Botanical Gardens Ballarat, Victoria

The guides at Ballarat Botanical Gardens like to spread their wings and visit other beautiful gardens. Earlier this year three guides visited four very different gardens in three countries

The atmosphere was electric on our 5 am adventure to the Hanoi Flower Market; the excitement, the multitude of motorbikes, and the array of beautiful flowers – moth-orchids nestled amongst cotton wool to protect their delicate blooms, roses with little caps to keep their buds tight, packed into protective cardboard containers. We wandered the lanes with lots of ‘oohing’ and ‘aahing’, while motorbikes and pushbikes, loaded to the hilt, went in all directions, to the city’s flower shops.

Sandi De Groot

Japanese gardens are unique; treasuries of spiritual wealth and peace. They use ‘shakei’ or ‘borrowed scenery’, incorporating landscape elements, water, stone and plants, to reproduce natural scenery in a miniature form or living painting. The Adachi Garden depicts the changing colours of seasons in four gardens, Dry Landscape, White Gravel and Pine, Moss, and Pond and Waterfall. Yushien Garden is a meticulously tended collection of 250 types of peonies, cultivated to bloom all year round in indoor and outdoor displays. The herbaceous Japanese peonies are grafted onto a stronger Chinese peony root. One proud gardener was asked to share his art. His answer was a beaming smile! The secret remains at Yushien!

Elizabeth Gilfillan

The mature Christchurch Botanical Gardens were founded in 1863 with the planting of an English oak; they have grown to become a much-loved destination for locals and visitors, more than a million each year. Natural wetlands and sand dunes have been transformed into an elegantly cultivated 21 ha park framed by mature trees and expansive lawns within a loop of the Avon River. Children and adults are actually encouraged to climb these mature trees! At the Museum entrance you’ll pass annual bedding displays, and cross the archery lawn to the rose garden; modern and cultivar roses make this a colourful and fragrant place. The New Zealand garden is an introduction to native species, while the conservatory displays cacti, succulents, tropical orchids and carnivorous plants. Well worth a visit.

Michael Bird

The mock-Gothic Lanarch Castle dominates the end of the Otago Peninsular on the edge of the Southern Ocean, about 20 minutes from Dunedin. The current owners bought it on a whim when it was in a shocking state, being used as a cattle shed! The castle is surrounded by seven acres of well-tended gardens with rambling paths through hedges and trees and massed displays of rhododendrons and azaleas. There are specialised gardens, Patterned, Lost Rock, Serpentine Walk, Rain Forest, South Seas, the Alice Lawn, the Laburnum Arch and Green Room. Since the 1930s the Garden has featured the Queen of Hearts, her wooden throne and a bronze Alice in Wonderland. Lanach is a bit twee, but very endearing.

Michael Bird



Endangered and vulnerable plants

Friends of Gold Coast Regional Botanic Garden Gold Coast, Queensland

After a ten year wait, flowers have finally appeared on a specimen of the Gold Coast's most endangered plant, situated at the Botanic Gardens. Rescued from development in 2009 as a large but young tree, the Ormeau Bottle Tree (*Brachychiton* sp.) has prospered and grown significantly. It is known to flower sporadically, and only after reaching a reasonable age.

Friends of the Botanic Gardens were thrilled to have a guest at a recent Endangered Plant Guided Walk notice a couple of small flowers on the inside branches while standing under the tree. Immediately after hearing me speak about how rarely it flowers! Great spotting by the visitor!

The *Commonwealth Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act* lists the tree among 191 Australian plants as Critically Endangered. It's also listed under the International Union for Conservation in Nature Red List, and is among over two thousand of the most endangered plants on the planet.

Friends and Council have shared a project creating an Endangered Plant Trail across the Gardens. A large Endangered Plant Trail sign starts the journey, leading visitors around 28 listed vulnerable and endangered local plants, and two critically endangered local plants. The signs were achieved with generous assistance from Rotary Gold Coast and Southern Pacific Developments with the support of Council.

Visitors are always surprised to learn that Macadamias are vulnerable in their natural habitat, and that the Blackbutt, which grows from southern New South Wales north through the Gold Coast, is now an endangered plant community locally. Plants in our Bush Foods Garden have grown to fruiting stage, with over 40 species, including several Endangered and Vulnerable species, in particular the Mullumbimby Davidson's Plum (*Davidsonia jerseyana*) and Small Leaved Tamarind (*Diploglotis campbellii*). Both have restricted distribution and are endangered.

For Friends and staff it is gratifying to witness the Botanic Gardens conservation role at work, protecting and promoting species at risk in the wild. Most visitors are surprised to see and learn how many endangered plants have been planted at the Botanic Gardens, and how many local species are listed as either endangered or vulnerable in state and commonwealth legislation.

Kate Heffernan



Ormeau Bottle Tree (*Brachychiton* sp.). Small Leaved Tamarind (*Diploglotis campbellii*). Mullumbimby Davidson's Plum (*Davidsonia jerseyana*)

Three exhibitions

Foundation and Friends of the Botanic Gardens Sydney, New South Wales

It has been a productive and busy year for Foundation and Friends, where we have hosted not one but three exhibitions in the Royal Botanic Garden Sydney. Most recently *Artisans in the Gardens*, showcased 4,000 exquisite pieces from 40 of Australia's finest artists and makers, and we proudly celebrated the exhibition's 19th year in October.

Our *Wild Thing* exhibition, showcasing all the wonderful wildlife within the Gardens, was a great success in August. It has been the first exhibition of its kind to be held in the Gardens where it

brought many new faces to our community. The closing event, in conjunction with Living Laboratory Science Festival, was a great initiative that introduced a younger generation to the wonderful world of science, wildlife and art.

The 20th anniversary exhibition of *Botanica* rewrote our record books with the highest sales in the exhibition's history and attendance up a third on last year. Foundation and Friends CEO Melissa Ellis credited the behind-the-scenes work for the event's success. "These exceptional achievements would not have been possible without the dedication of our hard-working curator, Robbie Macintosh, and the wonderful team of volunteers who ensured the professionalism of the 16-day exhibition." The People's Choice winner was Beverly Allen's exquisite *Tacca integrifolia* White Batflower and it's the image chosen for Foundation and Friends' 2019 limited-edition Christmas card. You can purchase this beautiful card from www.rbgsyd.nsw.gov.au/Card2019 and further support Foundation and Friends.

The largest herbarium digitisation project in the southern hemisphere is underway at the Royal Botanic Garden Sydney. This will share and protect the 1.4 million botanical specimens at the National Herbarium of NSW. Sharing the collection with the world will create opportunities for this vital data to be used by scientists across the world, helping protect our plants for the future. The project will also protect our collection by removing the need for physically handling specimens, keeping them intact for future generations. It costs just \$2 to digitise a specimen. Please visit www.rbgsyd.nsw.gov.au/donate to support this important project.



Beverly Allen *Tacca integrifolia*

Charlotte Sanders



Tangled up by Mollie Bosworth, featured at *Artisans in the Gardens*



White-eared Honeyeater by Geoffrey Carran, winner of The Peoples' Choice Award at *Wild Thing*

Tough times in Tamworth

Friends of the Tamworth Botanic Gardens Tamworth, New South Wales

Our current project is the re development of the cacti and succulent garden, which has existed in the garden for a long time, and some species, donated from time to time, were planted there. Recently the Botanic Garden staff have redesigned and rehabilitated this garden, and now it is ready for additions to the collection. The Friends have committed to purchasing some new plants, but this is proving easier said than done. We have had difficulty in finding a supplier of suitably sized plants, available in the quantities required. A possible source was a well-known succulent garden in Gilgandra, but Council would not fund a buying trip to this supplier. Some have been sourced from a local collector, but the search goes on. We hope that it will be a showcase of plants with low water requirements, plus a display of international plants.

Other than these plans, 2018-19 has been a very quiet year with very little activity. Due to the drought, we have not propagated plants, nor purchased stock for potting on, for plant sales. The annual Family Fun Day will not be on in 2019. As far as working bees go, we have asked for suggestions for projects, but none have been forthcoming. Council has moved their plants from the gardens' nursery compound to another location, but left plenty of mess in our potting shed. We just don't have enough members to look after plants in the nursery, and a promised new automated watering unit never arrived. So we don't have any plant propagation on the go. For most Friends groups this is a major activity, and source of income. We received a Volunteer Small Equipment grant, but have not yet decided what should be purchased.

Late in 2018, Council gave license to a private business operator to open the Garden Kiosk building (where we meet) as a café and Aboriginal keeping place. The Friends knew nothing of this, and found the people cleaning out our stuff and setting up shop when we arrived for a committee meeting. It was not until July 2019 that Council finally sent us a letter advising of this plan. During July 2019, a fence was constructed through our Threatened Species Garden, a collaboration between the Friends and the Australian Plants Society. Nobody will admit knowledge of this action, when rare plants were pulled up and disappeared.

Given this combination of events during the past year, the Friends are not happy campers at the moment. On a rare occasion when somebody from Council attended one of our meetings, he said that the Master-plan for the Garden will be updated in 2019-20, but we feel that Council does not show much interest in what could be an outstanding community facility. We do congratulate the horticultural team on doing a great job maintaining the garden under difficult conditions that are not just climatic.

Christine Reeves



Christine Reeves

The succulent garden ready for additions

Edinburgh Gardens' 350th birthday

Friends of the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh, Affiliate member Edinburgh, United Kingdom

As an affiliate member of AAFBG, we apologise that it has been some time since we shared any news with our colleagues on the other side of the world. The year 2020 is going to be an important year for us in Edinburgh – we will be celebrating our 350th anniversary; a botanic garden was established in Edinburgh in 1670 by two Edinburgh doctors, Robert Sibbald and Andrew Balfour.

The Friends contribution to the celebrations will be a Conference for Friends and Volunteers of Botanic Gardens. We have been busy over the past few months planning the program which will consist of talks, guided walks in the Garden, and tours to other Gardens, including Benmore and Dawyck, both of which are part of the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh group. The conference is taking place at the RBGE, from Wednesday 3 to Saturday 6 June. This is the link to our website: <https://www.rbge.org.uk/membership/friends-2020-conference/programme/> Booking is now open – look at the program, and I hope you will be tempted to sign up! Book your flights and join us in Edinburgh!

Another development which has been gathering momentum over the last 18 months is the establishment of a Friends of Botanic Gardens Forum. Initially discussions were held with Scottish botanic garden Friends' groups and we have now moved forward to liaise with Friends of botanic gardens south of the border. I admit that the idea for the Forum was derived from your Association about which I became aware when I was Convener of the Friends in Edinburgh. I met your former President in Canberra two years ago. He was very helpful and I appreciated his wise advice! We are not yet as slick as your organisation – it is early days! The launch of the Forum will take place at the Gala Dinner at the Conference on Wednesday 3 June.

We have now embarked on our winter program of coffee mornings and evening talks. The funds which we raise from these and other events support science and horticultural projects in all four of our gardens. For example, in 2018 we contributed to the funding of digitisation of data, making the scientific research of RBGE available to scientists globally, plus developing a lichen trail in our regional gardens and completing the Nepalese Gate in the Edinburgh garden.

We look forward to seeing some of you in Edinburgh in June next year.

Shiona Mackie, Edinburgh Friends Committee RBGE



The Nepalese Gate

Dame Elisabeth Murdoch's garden

*Cruden Farm, Affiliate member
Langwarrin, Victoria*



Situated 56 km south-east of Melbourne, just off the Peninsula Link freeway, sits the 133 acre Cruden Farm. Once inside the farm fence and up the gravel drive, the hum of suburban life is replaced with bird-song, children playing under Oaks and the occasional 'oo & ar.'

The garden and surrounding bushland is an ever-changing tapestry interwoven with the stories of those who have created and nurtured it through the years. A wedding gift from Sir Keith Murdoch to his young bride Elisabeth in 1928, Cruden still holds three pear trees from the original farm orchard. A Camphor laurel at the front of the house, Wisteria over the school room, a pair of Paul's Scarlet roses at the side entrance and a magnificent Rhododendron at the laundry door round out the pre-Murdoch plantings.

The avenue of *Corymbia citriodora* which line the main driveway, along with the Elms on the round lawn, and the stonework of the Walled garden, were all etched by Edna Walling. However, the vision for the garden, the quirks and the personal nature which Cruden Farm is known for, are the doing of Dame Elisabeth. Gardening in the same space for over 80 years, side by side with Michael Morrison ('Gardener No. 2') for over 40 of those years, Dame Elisabeth has left a legacy that both looks to the future and honours the past, and above all a place for people to come and enjoy.

These days the garden boasts established oaks, many of which were grown from seed on the property, along with beech, elm, willow and cypress. Below the canopy lies a Picking Garden, the perennial Walled Garden and several shrub borders all surrounded by lush green lawn and anchored by the lake. *Ceanothus* are found in the front border at the visitors' entrance; a plant which is also part of the collection in the Dame Elisabeth Murdoch California Garden at the Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria in Melbourne..

The garden must constantly evolve in order to stay the same. And so, the charitable trust behind Cruden Farm is currently working to fulfil Dame Elisabeth's legacy of opening the garden to the public. The first feature will be the construction of a 2.5 km walking trail through the bushland that surrounds the farm. It will be open daily – free of charge. Every visit made is a contribution to the conservation and maintenance of Cruden Farm for future generations. www.crudenfarm.com.au

Cruden Farm is open Monday to Friday, and on the third Sunday of every month, from 10 am to 4 pm. Adults \$20, children under 16 free. Cruden Farm offers AAFBG members a discounted entry of \$15 per person.

Australian Association of Friends of Botanic Gardens Inc

The AAFBG has 63 active member organisations, representing around 18,000 volunteers who give their time and skills to botanic gardens, parks and arboreta across Australia. AAFBG also has five international affiliate organisations.

The AAFBG has an MoU with the Botanic Gardens Australia and New Zealand (BGANZ) to ensure volunteers and professional staff of gardens, parks and arboreta have opportunities to cooperate at a range of levels to achieve their complementary aims.

The AAFBG is also a member of Botanic Gardens Conservation International, an organisation representing botanic gardens in more than 100 countries in a global network for plant conservation.

For information about Members see AAFBG website at

www.friendsbotanicgardens.org

also see website for full calendar of events

Calendar of events 2019

AAFBG Biennial Conference. Banks and Solander. Celebrating 250 years of Botanical Friends. 20-24 May 2020, Hosted by Friends of Brisbane Botanic Gardens and Sherwood Arboretum.

Websites worth visiting

Visit our website:

www.friendsbotanicgardens.org

Contact website editor to list your events or add garden photos to the members' gallery:

info@WordsWorthcommunicating.com

BGANZ on line Newsletter – *The Botanic Garden*

www.bganz.org.au/newsletter

Botanic Gardens Conservation International

<http://bgci.org/resources/news>

Garden Plant Conservation Association of Australia

www.gpcaa.com

Australian Native Plants Society

<http://asgap.org.au>

Significant Tree Registers – there are a number of State and local registers. Search: Significant Trees

Plants for the Planet:

www.plantsfortheplanet.com

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