

Jubaea



Friends of Geelong Botanic Gardens Inc Newsletter

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FRIENDS OF
GEELONG
BOTANIC
GARDENS

A Silver Friendship.....

*Celebrating 25 years of
friendship and volunteering*



“How fair is a garden ...”

The 19th Century British politician Benjamin Disraeli once commented: “How fair is a garden amid the trials and passions of existence”. At the time, his focus was most likely on the pleasure and relief that access to gardens offered – his use of the word ‘fair’ was probably an allusion to the attractiveness or beauty of gardens.

Gardens are no less attractive in the 21st Century. According to the American College of Sports Medicine, gardening isn’t just one of the most popular pursuits among the category of outdoor leisure activities – it is one of the most popular leisure activities overall! More than 275,000 adults and many thousands of children visit the gardens opened under Australia’s Open Garden Scheme (<http://www.opengarden.org.au/aboutus.html#q10>). And this passion for gardens and gardening seems to be supported by figures from the Australian Garden Market Monitor (2009) which show that in the 6 months to the 31st December 2009, Australians spent over \$3.75 billion on garden-related items and services.

But there is another interpretation of the word ‘fair’ – it can also mean ‘just’ or ‘equitable’. And there is no doubt that at a time when housing prices are rising to prohibitive levels and urban density is increasing, access to public gardens such as Botanic Gardens, community gardens and local parks is also an important issue of equity.

Research has shown that humans are not only physiologically but also psychologically and spiritually dependent on nature. In the 1980s, a famous Harvard biologist, Edward Wilson, observing the almost universal human tendency to crave contact with nature, developed an explanation for it, which he called the ‘biophilia hypothesis’. Basically, his thesis was that humans have lived in close contact with other species throughout human existence, and it is really only in the last 250 years that we have become separated from nature. Wilson reasoned that this change has occurred too quickly for us to have evolved enough to adapt to the change. Wilson’s view reflects a similar understanding to that of John Muir, the Founder of the Sierra Club – the largest so-called ‘grass roots’ environmental organisation in USA – who said:

“Everybody needs beauty as well as bread, places to play in and pray in, where Nature may heal and cheer and give strength to body and soul alike”.

Gardens (private, public and community) are some of the main ways for people to access nature. According to a recent survey, 86% of Australians believe that their garden offers health, wellbeing and relaxation benefits (NGIA, 2009). Research has shown that gardening provides opportunities for beneficial levels of physical activity. For example, research has shown that 'the lifting and reaching motions of gardening can strengthen weak muscles and increase limited joint flexibility ranges' and can improve physical stamina and skills such as balance and coordination (Rothert, 2007 p. 26). Gardening is also said to be a means of prevention for osteoporosis. Researchers at the University of Arkansas 'found that women 50 and older, who gardened at least once a week, showed higher bone density readings than those who engaged in other types of exercise including jogging, swimming, walking and aerobics' (Kovach, 2006 p.56).

But the benefits of gardens and gardening are not just physical. Analysis of data gathered in a Danish study showed that, while poorer access to private gardens, shared gardens or public green spaces was associated with being overweight, it was also linked to higher levels of stress (Nielsen & Hansen, 2007). The opportunity for asylum seekers and refugees to participate in gardening has been shown to assist in dealing with the traumas they have experienced prior to resettlement (Hodge, 2003). As well, gardens have been shown to be ideal places for developing friendships across ethnic and cultural boundaries, as they offer neutral, restorative and aesthetically pleasing environments (Seeland et al., 2009). And Australian research (Simons et al., 2006) has shown that people who garden daily have a 36% reduction in their risk of dementia. Gardens can facilitate social contact, reducing the risk of depression and increasing longevity (HCNDACRSP, 2004; Peacock et al., 2007).

The therapeutic potential of gardening is highlighted by Sifton (2004 p. 89) who tells the following story.

John Angus had worked all of his life with the land and plants; for John Angus, growing things was more than a way to earn a living, it was his life. ...Tragically, when I met John Angus, independently tending a garden or plants was out of the question due to the symptoms of advanced Alzheimer's disease. His language skills were quite well preserved, but he was particularly troubled by motor co-ordination and movement difficulties. He had so little command or sense of his body that he required full assistance to get dressed or even to sit in a chair. And distress with his losses often led to behavioural symptoms such as agitation.

John Angus had been living in various institutions for several months when I suggested that he come with me to help with some potting up. The very suggestion brightened him up immensely. As I guided his hands to the potting soil, tears began to run down his smiling cheeks. With hands immersed in his beloved soil, John Angus said: 'This is just heaven, just heaven, and I had no idea that it was so handy to home'.

A comprehensive discussion of the benefits of gardens and gardening would take much longer than is possible in this article, but I hope that, through this article, the importance of gardens and gardening to health and wellbeing has been highlighted. In our ageing society, in which urban areas are becoming more densely populated, the population is becoming more diverse, and the support of families is less readily available because families are becoming more geographically dispersed, the importance of access to gardens, and especially to public and community gardens, has never been greater. It is an issue not only of 'beauty' but also of 'bread'. We need to ensure that gardens continue not only to be 'fair' but also to be 'fairly distributed', so that all have access to their healing and health promoting powers.

Associate Professor Mardie Townsend PhD, Faculty of Health Medicine, Nursing and Behavioural Sciences, Deakin University

From the President

This edition of Jubaea celebrates a remarkable achievement.....

the Silver Anniversary of Friendship at the Geelong Botanic Gardens. Twenty-Five Years of contribution is indeed a milestone. The Geelong Community is fortunate to have such a knowledgeable and dedicated group of individuals committed to supporting the GBG.

The recent plantings along Botanic Circuit are a City milestone. These plantings will transform Eastern Park, securing the passive landscape and building a framework for the future reinstatement of the historic pinetum. The recent rains have ensured the trees successful establishment and within a few short years we will all be enjoying framed views of the You Yangs across Corio Bay.

The UCI World Cycling Championships show cased Geelong to the World as never before. Over 200 million people shared the benefit of a birds-eye view of the GBG. Geelong sparkled, but there is not doubt that the Geelong Botanic Gardens were seen as the 'Jewel in the Crown' of our City. Congratulations

to the City for such a successful event. The Friends look forward to welcoming a new group of International Visitors.

On behalf of the organisation I would like to commend each and every Volunteer who has assisted The Friends over the last 25 years. The combined value of your contribution cannot be easily measured. I also thank the Membership; your ongoing support strengthens the organisation and ensures that The Friends are able to deliver a high level of diverse services to our community. I am confident that future generations will reflect on your shared vision for the Geelong Botanic Gardens and be thankful of your stewardship and support for this beautiful place.

Helena Buxton



“Preliminaries”

...the start of a long and rewarding “Friendship”...

George Jones the FGBG 1985 inaugural President takes us on a stroll down memory lane.



George Jones receives the Golden Laurel Award for services to media from the Australian Horticultural Media Association

An anniversary is a time for reflection and happy memories of the past 25 years come flooding back. However the idea of supporting the Gardens (Geelong Botanic Gardens) in a practical manner came much earlier, as I recall when George Vafiopoulous was Superintendent of Parks and Gardens, which, of course, included the Botanic Gardens. George was also President of the Geelong Horticultural Society, which later became Geelong Garden Club. He was known to the members as “Mr Vaf”, an indication of the regard felt for him.

In his dual roles “Mr Vaf” was able to establish a strong link between the Gardens and the members. Annual rose pruning demonstrations were popular. When there was a call for volunteers to do some weeding there was a ready response, several members turning up with their hand forks. Friendships with the gardening staff developed but care was taken in not letting them fear their jobs were threatened.

Weeding for an hour or so was being helpful, but then came a more serious need: watering with hand-held hoses during a period of water restrictions. The white ¾ inch hoses were long and some effort was required in handling them, nevertheless there were volunteers concerned about the welfare of the plants.

In March 1974, Mr Vaf left Geelong to be the first Parks Superintendent at Wyong in New South Wales. I succeeded him as President of the Garden Club and Andrew James Reynolds moved into the Cottage adjacent to the Gardens. Seven years later, Ian Rogers followed him, then in 1985 becoming the first (Geelong Botanic Gardens) Director.

It was that year that Jayne Salmon and Jenny Happell, both voluntary guides at the Royal Botanic Gardens Melbourne, came

to a conclusion that a similar service should be introduced at Geelong. I met them at the Gardens and was in agreement. With the support of Ian Rogers, it was decided to form a Friends group and for this purpose a public meeting at City Hall was held which resulted in unanimous approval. The aims included generally promoting the Gardens.

I can still “see” Jayne and Jenny in the front row, also other enthusiasts who would take an active part in the Friends’ activities. Since 1979 I had a weekly gardening column in The Geelong Advertiser. The new organisation would need publicity with a view to gaining members, which was sufficient reason to elect me as inaugural President.

A steering committee was formed to make all the necessary formal arrangements. Ian Rogers was the Acting Secretary and he produced the Newsletters, No. 1 being the Summer/Autumn issue of 1986. Lorraine Preston was Treasurer and she was kept busy banking subscriptions.

Training as guides was one of the benefits of membership that would have appealed to some. Another aim was to have a kiosk as an amenity for visitors to the Gardens and it eventually came as the “Friends’ Teahouse”.

Jayne and Jenny served on the Committee and their Melbourne experience and enthusiasm was evident from the start. In time Jenny would take up residence in Melbourne, while Jayne continued to work strenuously for the successful development of the Friends, indeed, on reflection, it can be said “the Jayne Salmon era” had already begun.....

Discovering The Geelong Botanic Gardens ...

... the story of guiding at the GBG



Are you here for the walk today?.....

Have you ever wondered who the volunteer guides are, who take these walks or how they came to be standing in their green vests at the front gates to our gardens twice a week come rain, hail or shine?

The inaugural meeting of the Friends in November 1983 determined that one of its first priorities was to instigate a guide training program. Guides would be able to provide visitors with the opportunity to take a guided walk through the gardens and to learn more about our gardens, its history, plants and hidden secrets.

The first guide training program started the following year under the mentorship of President George Jones and the guiding hand of Jenny Happell, a volunteer guide from the Melbourne Botanic Gardens. This first group was made up of several members of the Friends committee: Jayne Salmon, also a guide in Melbourne, Allan Grant, Harry Moss, and Bob and Lorraine Preston, as well as Jean Abbey, Rita Hammond, Valerie Buller, Jimmie Morrison, Margaret Cook, Lou Stinson and Jill Murphy. Guides come and go but George continues to mentor all our guides while Jayne and Lou remain active members of today's guides group.

Walks were initially offered each Wednesday morning from the Hansen Gates. Sunday afternoon walks were added in 1992 and the starting point for the walks moved to "the ship" at the entrance to the 21st Century gardens from 2002.

School groups soon became an important facet of the guides' tasks. I remember accompanying my children on several school outings to the gardens. We entered through the rather dark and gloomy car park to be met by our guide at the gates and shown the wonders of the gardens. Inevitably, the most exciting activity was to see and try and touch the eels in the now gone old, leaky pond in what is now the Asian garden. The rainforest with its exotic ferns and cool dappled light was also a highlight as it continues to be with today's school children.

By the late 1990's it was clear that employing a dedicated Education Officer who would be able to tailor visits to the needs of the school curriculum would better cater for school groups.

Ro Noone was appointed Education Officer in 2002. Volunteer Guides, and more recently experienced volunteer teachers have assisted in providing Education programs in the gardens. In the middle of this year this role was taken over by paid sessional teachers.

Over time, various guides have delivered walks on an increasing range of specialist topics. Have you ever been on a walk explaining the complexity of plant evolution or to marvel at our impressive significant trees? The range of specialist walks offered by today's group of guides continues to grow and includes presentations on our *Salvia* collection, edible plants and those used by aboriginal people as well as seasonal walks through the camellias and roses. One walk that I'm sorry to have missed is George Jones turning back the clock and taking a walk through the gardens at the time of Federation (1901). Visitors were taken back in time to the days of the original 19th Century gardens to view many of our older trees and the impressive Raddenberry shade house - at least in their imagination!

New specialist walks are introduced every year to reflect individual guides' particular interests or to coincide with an event or exhibition. Watch out in 2011 for walks based around Eastern Park, edible and not so edible plants and seasonal highlights of our gardens.

Our guides have always been on hand to explain and interpret changes to the gardens. No living garden remains unchanged over time. Our gardens are no exception, having developed from Daniel Bunce's small nursery garden on an exposed hillside to late 19th Century pleasure gardens through to the somewhat overgrown gardens of the mid to late 20th Century and finally to the current "Three Centuries, Three Landscapes" garden we see today. At each major change over the last 25 years, whether it be opening up the main axis of the 19th Century garden in the late 1990s, restoring historic structures within the gardens or building the 21st Century Gardens, volunteer guides have been on hand to explain to visitors what is going on and what they might see by the time of their next visit. The guides continue in this role as individual garden beds are rejuvenated, trees are removed due to age or storm damage and as we anticipate possible developments for a Visitor Precinct in Eastern Park.

The position of "Volunteer guide" is not entirely devoted to walking people around our gardens. We currently have 15-20 volunteer guides who meet once a month to coordinate our program of rostered and booked walks as well as to learn about developments within the gardens, to share our knowledge of the gardens and to socialise. Since 1997, our guides have also had the opportunity to take place in the biannual Australasian Conference of Volunteer Guides and meet up with other guides from around the country as well as visiting other botanic gardens.

Not all guiding is confined to the gardens or to daylight hours! The guides are frequently asked to give talks to community groups about the gardens and recently, about water-wise gardening. Visits to aged care facilities have also become increasingly common. These visits are now part of a special program delivered by a small sub-group of guides called "Bringing the Gardens to you" coordinated by Rosemary Turner.

Today's volunteer guides are a diverse group of people with experience in a range of workplaces and professions. All however, share a love a plants and the Geelong Botanic Gardens and have a desire to share that love with the wider community. The principle of training volunteer guides to be the public face of the gardens and to interpret the gardens to visitors continues. Prospective guides are taken through a training program, which enables them to build on their knowledge of the Geelong Botanic Gardens and to gain the skills, necessary to interpret our gardens to the public. Those interested in joining the next training program in 2011 should contact the Friends Office.

Author: Jenny Possingham (Guides Coordinator)

Free "Discovery Walks" are offered by the Friends of the Geelong Botanic Gardens each Wednesday (10.30am) and Sunday (2 pm) throughout the year.

This article is based, in part, on a longer history of volunteer Guides at the Geelong Botanic Gardens prepared by Jayne Salmon for the Friends Silver Jubilee.

Gardens Just Like Ours – Or Not!



In June / July this year, Ro Noone FGBG Education Officer, visited botanical gardens, public gardens and national parks in North America. Some were huge; others were "just like ours". A few of them had great ideas for increasing visitation. Many had a good mix of fun and beauty. All of them were inspiring.

Join Ro for an illustrated talk on Monday 18th October at 11am at the GBG Meeting Room

Bookings ph (03) 5222 6053 or email
HYPERLINK "<mailto:friendsgbg@sunet.com.au>"
friendsgbg@sunet.com.au gold coin donation.



High Tea In Spring....

The Teahouse lawns are beckoning visitors to our next High Tea event this spring. Crisp linen, fine china and sweet smelling flowers are set and waiting for your pleasure.

The menu will include savory and sweet dainties served with a special blend of tea. What a luxury, whiling away the afternoon, cup, saucer and cake in hand.

The day has been especially set aside allowing you to invite friends and relatives who may be enjoying the pleasure of the Melbourne Cup weekend.

At a cost of only \$15 per head, High Tea is a wonderful way to while away an afternoon.

The Friends Teahouse at the Botanic Gardens is one of Geelong's treasures.

Sunday October 31, Bookings Recommended

Potters to Growing Friends

- 25 Years of Propagation and Potting



A gloved Roz Hill, happy and hard at work in the Growers Nursery

The Growing Friends had their beginnings in a small group of volunteers who helped at a 'fuchsia potting bee' coordinated by Heather Mayall in 1985. The plants were sold at a Fuchsia Sale early in the next year.

Records of activities are sparse, but the 'potters' certainly contributed regularly to fundraising from the inception of FGBG. By 1990, the group numbered 16 and was ready to adopt a name: the Growing Friends. Aims and objectives were formulated and a roster drawn up for the Wednesday morning sales. One of the aims was to "assist in the rejuvenation of the perennial bed", which had deteriorated to a sad, narrow strip. Lesley Stewart took up the challenge with Jimmie Morrison, who was already involved with the gardens as a guide. Generous donations of plants from Judy Bailey (Wirruna Nursery) completed the transformation. From that time on, the Perennial Border has been a real highlight for visitors to the GBG.

Lesley Stewart and Darrell Strickland were early Growing Friends coordinators and among the 1992 volunteers were Phyl McElroy, Irene Schlotz and Rosemary Turner, all whom continue to work for the Friends today. Irene recalls the early days: "it was a very small group and we had to bring all of our own tools. We were told exactly what to do." It seems that those in authority kept a tight rein on the volunteers in those days!

George Young began to work with the Growing Friends in the early 1990s, taking particular responsibility for nurturing the plants during the summer. He spent many hours at the gardens, soon becoming Operations Director for the nursery. Ann Nicol was the group coordinator and growers' representative on the FGBG Committee.

Under George's iron rule, the Friends' nursery expanded and prospered. George taught propagation techniques to many volunteers, and once taught, anyone who did an incorrect cutting was in trouble. Pots were arranged in strictly parallel lines, with labels all facing in one direction. At morning tea time, George remained on duty in the nursery and a special tray of treats was brought to him.

George worked in the nursery almost daily. As the numbers grew, with several outspoken new volunteers, George could be heard muttering, 'Bloody women!'. It was at this stage that Roz Hill came on board to assist with coordination. In spite of bouts of illness, George remained on duty literally until the day he died. He was very much loved by his 'bloody women'. Many of today's volunteers can be seen casting their eyes heavenward and saying, "Sorry, George" when a plant is not properly aligned.

The nursery had by now become a major fundraiser for the FGBG. Under Roz Hill's leadership, it became a more professional operation, with a regular Wednesday clientele, as well as 3 or 4 seasonal sales which raised up to \$40,000 p.a.

With the establishment of the 21st Century Garden in 2002 an effort was made to establish the nursery as a serious source for drought resistant plants, Australian native plants and local indigenous species. It was also time to take another look at aims, objectives and operations. Lead by John Arnott, the GBG staff were ready and willing to help with expertise and labour. The Growing Friends were happy to learn from them, and took responsibility for specific sections of the nursery, working in partnership with GBG specialists. The dispersion of responsibility made sense with volunteer

numbers now approaching 30. Production escalated rapidly with the new organisation.

Many friendships were made in this diverse group, drawn together by their common love of plants and gardens. At morning tea, other common interests were found and excursions organised. One was to the Royal Botanic Gardens, to meet the Melbourne Growing Friends and trade ideas. We were impressed with their buildings and procedures, especially the computerised stock records, catalogues and labels.

Soon afterwards, plans were drawn up for a new shed and potting area, much needed with our increased numbers. We also met with the RBG coordinator to discuss their computerised system and were generously offered a copy of their purpose built software. Many hours of consultation, data entry and adjustments to nursery procedures followed. We have had our issues, but the system is now working as planned, just in time for a massive increase in production.

It is impossible to name all the workers who have contributed to this leap forward, but one name is especially significant in a history of the nursery. Ann Nicol, who coordinated the Growing Friends back in 1992, now plays a vital role in this

new automated project. Ann has seen so many changes over the years and has adapted to all of them, linking the beginnings of the Growing Friends Nursery with its most recent transformation.

Where to from here? The Growing Friends are poised to expand production and improve processes, ready for the future, whether it includes a special collection of Silver Plants for the 25 year celebration, a greater role in community education or a vital presence in a new state of the art Eastern Park Visitor Centre. The group will certainly continue to provide an important source of revenue for the FGBG, and the services and support it provides for Geelong Botanic Gardens.

These days when we meet for morning tea, it is a real event, with up to 30 growers, plus library volunteers, admin. staff, committee members, perennial border team and assorted visitors. It is still a famine or a feast: there could be several plates of delicious home cooking, or we might have to share a scavenged packet of biscuits. That is all part of the fun for this rewarding, sometimes noisy, but always happy and welcoming group.

Liz Bennetto



Geelong Botanic Gardens

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**25TH ANNIVERSARY
SPRING PLANT SALE**

10AM-4PM Saturday 30TH & Sunday 31ST October

Friends of Geelong Botanic Gardens | Phone: (03) 5222 6053 | Email: friendsgbg@sunet.com.au | www.friendsgbg.com



A Perennial Challenge, the story of the Perennial Border at the GBG

A little of the background ...

The Geelong Botanic Gardens 'Perennial Border' was inspired by the border at the Royal Botanic Gardens Melbourne, under the direction of their curator Donna Somerville. The catalyst was when Donna spoke at a Friends meeting in March 1989.

The Friends and the Gardens were very fortunate; Judy Bailey (of Wirruna Nursery) held a long-standing arrangement to share plants with the then GBG Director Ian Rogers. During July 1989 the existing beds on either side of the central pathway were completely reworked, guidance was provided by Judy Bailey and the project developed into a joint effort between The Friends and Garden Staff. After 21 years this partnership between the Garden Staff and Friends continues.

Ten years later, in 1994, refurbishment was again undertaken. At this time the south border became known as the 'Tea House' border and the northern side was called the 'Kauri' border.

A number of outstanding gardeners were involved in the early days, Leslie Stewart, Elizabeth Vorath, Meryl Looney and Lousie Player with Jimmie Morrison and Judy Bailey – all had private gardens of such high standing that they were open to the public from time to time.

Such was the enthusiasm that with the arrival of John Arnott in 2000 we increased the size of the south border by a third. The aim was to create a garden of mainly perennial plants, with shrubs to provide structure and something of interest all year around. Bold shapes and massed planting continue to be used as a counter balance to mature trees that form the backdrop. Plants are grouped for different effect or size, form, texture and colour and of course suitability to our particular conditions.

The border is intended to showcase plants that do well in the Geelong region with low watering requirements. Starting from the far south side the colours run from pink to maroon, to red yellows and blue connecting across the grass path to red, oranges and purple. A full shade border on the northern side is mainly foliage contrast with some white and pale yellow flowers scattered with blue. The border is very low maintenance and attractive all year round.

The hunt is always on for new plants and new nurseries! The Perennial Border team is known to drive many miles across the State and celebrate at the purchase of that rare and unusual 'find'. The border has looked very good through the 12 year drought; however last year was perhaps the best ever after good spring rain. The extra moisture provided size and vigour to the plants – we had all forgotten what a difference rain makes.

The border has been maintained for many years by the same team, currently 7 or 8 of us meet every Wednesday morning and look forward to seeing what has happened in the intervening 6 days. Much time is spent plotting and planning over coffee at the Teahouse at the end of our sessions.

The Perennial Border looks its best from October through to May finishing with a lovely display of white tree dahlias and the wonderful yellow *Kniphofia ensifolia* sp.. In the last few years we have collected dahlias in a large range of colours, these plants flower throughout this period and have become the mainstay, along with many cannas. We are currently hoping to trial more *chrysanthemums* sp. to boost the final autumn display.

As plants increase in size they are divided and dispersed across the bed. Any excess is donated to the Growing Friends who then pot the divisions and when established, sell them at their seasonal sales. The perennial plants are always a popular item – people see them growing in the border and want a little for their own home garden.

In closing.....we have approximately 275 years of gardening experience behind us, this has surprised us all. We always enjoy chatting to the public on the Wednesday mornings; it is one of the great pleasures of volunteering 'at the Gardens'. We try very hard to get the right nomenclature – but occasionally it takes the whole group to drag the right name out.

Heather Boyd and the Perennial Border Team



*Planting the Silver Anniversary Border along the Washingtonia Walk
Jason Hore assists the Perennial Border Team*

Rosy Commitments - Heritage Roses at the GBG

During November 1999 Geelong was the host City for the highly successful National Heritage Rose Conference. In the lead-up to this event the Western District branch were offered the opportunity to redevelop the Rose Gardens at the Geelong Botanic Gardens (previously planted with Hybrid Teas). It took several years of planning and discussions, with the group finally successful in obtaining permission for the project to proceed. We received funding via a grant from Heritage Roses Australia to purchase the roses, whilst the GBG supplied new soil for the beds.

A group met regularly to plan and design the garden and select the roses. In August 1999 bulldozers cleared the site and our members, along with the assistance of Gardens Staff, replanted the beds with approximately 300 roses, creating ten beds. The refurbished beds are planted in groups, progressing through the species roses to the more modern breeding of David Austin. As they are so prolific and long flowering, *Rosa Iceberg* appears in the first two garden beds making an initial significant visual impact. Wilhelm Kordes, one of our international speakers at the conference and whose family were responsible for the breeding of *Rosa Iceberg* was impressed with the new planting and the Gardens. Amongst the roses, an eye-catching feature is the climbing pillars, constructed, including the welding by former member June Stafford.

Our Heritage Rose group membership has declined over the years, but we continue to work as a team every third Monday of the month. We also finance the purchase of new plants for the rose garden. During the year we regularly 'dead-head' the roses and follow a strict program for feeding the plants. Winter brings our big prune. It is a huge task but in recent years we have been very grateful for the assistance of the Gordon Institute TAFE students. Rene Perkins, a former member of Heritage Roses, always organises her students with a 'hands on' pruning lesson. Usually we each work with several students, endeavouring to teach them pruning skills and to be aware of the different methods for the various rose groups.

Possums! How they love our roses! Over the years we have had to replace a number of roses they have destroyed. Last year, in an attempt to protect our climbing roses on the towers, we planted clematis which we hope will clamber through them, protecting the new shoots from possums seeking their evening supper – they do not like clematis.

At the conclusion of each 'working bee' we enjoy a relaxing coffee and catch-up. There is much laughter and chat and we always look forward to this time. Volunteering gives you a sense of involvement and connection in the community. For gardeners what better place to do this than the Geelong Botanic Gardens!

***If you are interested in joining the Heritage Rose group you should contact Zoe Minotti
care of the Friends 5222 6053***

The Library over 25 years

In the 1993 – 4 annual report the President Jayne Salmon reported the "library is an excellent resource and has recently been catalogued by Sue Darby" and contains over 700 books.

An early advocate for the library was the then director, Ian Rogers who had a private book collection and an interest in botany and horticulture. The books ranged over the whole range of botanical subjects and included some important reference items.

Sue Darby had made up an alphabetical catalogue card listing of the collection, which included photographs and prints.

In 1996 the Gardens received a \$2000 grant to assist with the library upgrade, which with a matching Friends contribution a computer and library software was purchased.

In 1997 the library moved to the "portable building" and was looking for a "Friendly" librarian and Meralyn Roberts answered the call. She organized a small group of volunteers to complete various projects, including covering many of the books and indexing the early Jubaeas. These indexes are a very useful source for historical information about the Friends and their activities.

At his stage there were about twenty books for Friend's to borrow and much of the remaining collection was pre 1970's. This has changed to an extent with the purchase of recent material by the Gardens' Management and some ongoing purchases and donations by Friends. There are now over 1000 records on the catalogue and the Friends' borrowing collection has grown substantially.

The Library has benefited from a number of donations, most notably collections from the estates of Don Foreman, Bill Straede and Pam Thomas, also material from Alistair Watts. Gail Thomas has been an ongoing benefactor through her role as a reviewer of books and we appreciate her generosity.

The library received some excess shelving from the Geelong Regional Library and has been able to expand the available space for each of the collections of meeting room user groups. The actual space of the library has not changed but it has been completely reorganised.

Meralyn continues to provide regular assistance and Phyl McElroy has taken on the task of relabelling the books. The larger clearer type is better than the faded labels produced from our ancient old typewriter.

The library provides a reference collection for the Garden' staff, Friends and the members of the special interest groups, whose collections are housed in the space.

Our current catalogue is quite an old database by today's standards and in the age of computers the search will go on for a suitable more up to date system.

"Much has changed, but much remains the same"

Luanne Thornton

I will meet you at the Teahouse.....

the story of tea, scones and friendships, 1992 – 2010



As this Silver Anniversary issue of Jubaea goes to print the Friends Teahouse will celebrate its 18th Birthday. Open for business on the 5th October 1992 the initial establishment was a partnership between the City of Geelong and The Friends.

Nestled on the edge of the Fernery the Teahouse has offered “Tea and Sympathy” to generations of visitors. Devonshire tea continues as a favourite, equally matched by a light lunch of harvest pie and salad. Over its life the Staff and Volunteers have humored Geelong Botanic Gardens visitors, offering advice and information. Regulars like to hear “the news of the Gardens”, what changes have occurred and what plans abound.

Patrons at the Teahouse seek its gentle sunshine, quiet ambience, the birds and lush views, so rare during our recent drought. The change of season is a special highlight for regular visitors. All types come to enjoy the peace that the GBG offers, Retirement Villages and Nursing Homes love the wellbeing that a visit to the Gardens bring their residents. In contrast Kindergartens are regular autumn visitors, the laughter of small children ringing through the air at their delight with the falling leaves, a treat of ice-cream keeping everyone happy.

The Teahouse operates 7 days per week, only closing when the weather is particularly inclement; however some hardy souls will even seek a Devonshire tea on the wettest of days. Staffed by 62 Volunteers this hard working team ensures that the doors open from 11am to 4pm each day. Over 18 years this has been an enormous contribution to our community.

The current coordinator, Jan Perry, is assisted by a number of staff, but it is the great team effort that is offered by all that makes this place special for volunteers and our visitors alike. If the walls could speak they would talk of happy chatter, loves won and lost, children come to this world and memories of those gone. It is a quiet place for friends and family, a place filled with memories and happiness.

Of course there has been the occasional moment of humour ...

A kind hearted man enjoying a quiet afternoon alone enquired ... ‘what type of strawberry jam was on the scone?’ ... close inspection of the plate exposed “Chutney” ... a special style of Teahouse strawberry ... meant for the pasties not for scones.

Jan Perry & Helena Buxton

Do You Have A Spare Moment?

The Friends at the Geelong Botanic Gardens are always seeking assistance with our various activities.

If you have some time please consider sharing it with The Friends....

In The Teahouse ... Jan Perry is urgently seeking extra hands ... you do not need to be an expert ... just bring enthusiasm and a smiling face ... Jan and the Teahouse Team will teach you the fine art of serving scones and tea making.

Music In The Gardens ... The Friends are seeking people with First Aid Training. This will ensure that we continue to offer a safe and happy environment for all those attending our annual Summer Concert series. A bonus is that you will be able to attend the Concerts while offering a volunteer service in our community.

Activities and Marketing ... During Music In the Gardens people are needed to assist the entry gates, help in the Teahouse, sell raffle tickets and provide information to patrons. Do you have a Sunday evening in February to spare?

In The Library ... some short term duties ... assisting with the mail out of Jubaea 4 times per year, it takes a couple of hours to add flyers and slip them into envelopes. Scrap-booking ... help us keep a record of our activities and volunteering, a record for the future.

It is only through our Volunteers that we are able to deliver the variety of activities so important to our community.

What Friendship means to a garden

What began as a love-hate relationship between a group of Botanic Garden advocates and a city Council has turned into a 25 year marriage worth celebrating. The silver theme for the 25 year anniversary will resound with those who have long-term relationships which have lasted the test of time. These days the term partnership is more apt in describing the win-win style of many professional relationships. Geelong Botanic Gardens has benefited immensely from the 25 year long partnership with the Friends.

What began as strong advocacy soon expanded to support the City with planning and fundraising which has enabled many improvements to be made to the Botanic Garden over the years. We are one of few regional Botanic Gardens who have such a strong guiding and education program and the capacity to facilitate a range of community events. The community has benefited from the opportunity to join the Friends and social networking is one of the most understated gifts that the Friends has to offer its membership.

This ongoing voluntary effort has supported the professional team at the Geelong Botanic Gardens to focus on the business of developing and maintaining the garden. For without the Garden what would all these passionate volunteers be doing? The wealth of plant material that we curate generates:

- many stories which are shared by the Guides with their audiences
- numerous fascinating facts about plants are imparted to the inquisitive minds of children by our Teachers
- a love of plants by learning to grow them for sale or presenting them to best effect in the Perennial Border
- a beautiful and peaceful place for social connection at the Teahouse or during Friends activities

All of which is enough to fully occupy some 120 active volunteers and a membership base of over 500 people.

With the passionate and professional gardens team and the support of volunteers the future of the Geelong Botanic Gardens is secure. The future direction of the Geelong Botanic Gardens and Eastern Park is guided by the Strategic Plan. The Friends have been very much involved in the development of the plan and over the next 25 years will see numerous positive changes implemented which will confirm the important role that the garden has to play as a leading regional Botanic Garden.

To those of you who have, or will, help us to achieve our goals over the coming years I humbly thank you for your lasting Friendship.

Annette Zealley
Director, Geelong Botanic Garden

Inspired by the Gardens, Botanic Art at the GBG

Many of the significant botanical gardens of the world have collections of botanical art and illustrations, or allow access to their plants for artists. Providing scientifically accurate images of plants, their stages of growth, external and internal features, these collections have proved extremely important. They continue to be accessed for study and reference by those involved in science, the many varied professional areas of botany, teachers, students, artists and the general public.

Originating in the need to document plants useful to society, botanic art also became valued for its aesthetic qualities. Wealthy patrons and nations sponsored the documentation of the flora of new countries into collections of drawing and paintings of previously unknown species. To this day sponsorship of differing kinds continues to be provided to Artists pursuing the field of Botanic Study.

Whilst documentation of new species and newly bred varieties is important, there is also a critical need to record species which may become extinct, or endangered. The Geelong Botanic Gardens house a very significant group of heritage trees, it is important that these be recorded for both historical as well as scientific purposes.

The Botanical Artists working at the Friends Meeting Room at the GBG are currently documenting both the Heritage

trees, other collections such as the Salvias and Pelargonium and various native flora, as well as individual plants. When Geelong hosted the international Pelargonium Conference in 2006 Artists painted many of the varieties held by the GBG. These paintings were displayed at the Conference Centre and promoted much interest and discussion amongst both International and Australian participants. Several of these paintings were purchased. As well as providing the pleasure given by a beautiful work of art, these works serve as a reminder of the significant collection housed by our Gardens.

The exhibition *'Inspired By Nature'*, held in 2009 at the Gordon Gallery hosted visits of over 30 people per day, including some school groups. This interest in the melding of the artistic with the scientific into works is a wonderful way to stimulate continued interest in our global flora. As the GBG continues to develop, attracting visitors from differing backgrounds and countries, so the interest of the artists is also stimulated by new areas and plantings. Hopefully this interest will continue to provide a wealth of enjoyment and information for generations to come as has proved the case with the botanic collections throughout the world.

Helen Black, Botanic Art Student

What's on

Events, dates for the diary

October

What: **Illustrated Talk – ‘Gardens Just Like Ours – Or Not!’**

Speaker: Ro Noone, FGBG Education Officer – Be taken on a journey through some of America's most beautiful and interesting Botanic Gardens and National Parks. How similar are they to our Gardens and how do they engage with their visitors?

Where: GBG Meeting Room

When: Monday 18th, 11am – 12noon, Gold Coin Donation

What: **Special Guided Walk – ‘Plants of Australia’**

Learn more about the ingenious survival strategies of Australia's native plants, born of their struggle to survive our harsh weather conditions and impoverished soils.

When: Sunday 24th 2pm

Where: Meet your Guide at front steps of GBG – Gold Coin Donation

What: **Mad Hatters Tea Party – A Special Event for Pre School Children**

Celebrating Children's Week with the City of Greater Geelong, be entertained by Storyteller Anne E Stewart & take a Bug Walk with GBG Teachers (children must be accompanied by an adult)

Where: Meet at The Teahouse

When: Monday 25th, 4 Sessions: 10am, 11am, 1pm & 2pm

Free Event - Limited numbers for each session - Bookings are advised

Contact the Friends office 52226053

What: **Friends' Nursery – Spring Weekend Plant Sale**

Featuring a selection of rare and unusual plants propagated from the 'Silver Border', don't miss an opportunity to purchase a garden treasure

When: Sat-Sun. 30th & 31st 10am-4pm daily

Where: The Friends' Nursery, Enjoy High Tea at the Teahouse then follow the red flags to the rear of the GBG

What: **High Tea in Spring**

Sip a special blend of tea, enjoy cucumber sandwiches, cup cakes and delight your friends with sweet delicacies from the Teahouse.

When: Sunday 31st 11am to 4pm

Where: The Friends Teahouse – \$ 15 per head - Bookings advised – 0409 031358

November

What: **25 Years of Friendship, A Silver Anniversary Dinner**

Throw off those gardening gloves, take a trip down memory lane and come celebrate and dine in splendid company. Complimentary champagne and pre dinner nibbles in the shaded garden, music for dining and dancing with Gary Tigani. Celebrate with 'Friends'.

When: Thursday 25th 7 for 7.30pm

Where: Truffleduck, Balmoral Receptions, Hamilton

Highway, Fyansford

Cost: Friends \$85.00, Non Members \$95.00 (wine not included)

What: **Special Guided Walk – ‘Roses & Other Garden Favourites’**

Join your Guide and indulge your senses on an exploration of the heritage roses and other spring high-lights along the Perennial Border.

When: Sunday 14th 2pm

Where: Meet your Guide at front steps of GBG – Gold Coin Donation

What: **Special Guided Walk – ‘Spring into Salvias’**

We hold the national collection of Salvias. With over 600 species world wide, although not all represented in our gardens, there are always Salvia's in flower. Come and see for yourself.

When: Sunday 21st 2pm

Where: Meet your Guide at front steps of GBG – Gold Coin Donation

December

What: **Thank You to Our Volunteers & Christmas Drinks**

In association with The City of Greater Geelong, the Friends Committee will acknowledge the contribution and efforts of our many Volunteers and host a Christmas celebration.

You will also have an opportunity to meet our award winning Botanic Art Tutors, look at their works & purchase cards & prints.

When: Monday 6th 4pm onward

Where: Bunya Lawn – A Free event for members

What: **Special Guided Walk – ‘Silver Stunners’**

The Silver Border was planted to celebrate 25 years of Friendship between the GBG and the Friends. Come with our Guides to get better acquainted with these silver stunners, hardy drought tolerant plants that adapt well to our local conditions.

When: Sunday 12th 2pm

Where: Meet your Guide at front steps of GBG – Gold Coin Donation

Remember to mark these Summer dates in your Diary – Full details appearing in the next edition of Jubaea

2011 January

Master Gardeners at the GBG – An exciting new initiative Full details to be announced in the next edition of Jubaea

The Golden Age – a 3 Day Summer Workshop in Botanic Art

A workshop that will take its inspiration from the Golden Age of Botanical Illustration, specimens collected from the GBG, with Rita Parkinson

Week commencing 17th January

For cost and full details: Contact the Friends office 52226053

February

Music In The Gardens, A series of 4 Summer Concerts Every Sunday in February 5pm to 7.30pm \$15 Adults, Children Free