



*F*RIENDS OF THE CANBERRA
INTERNATIONAL ARBORETUM
AND GARDENS (CIAG) INC

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Friends of the Canberra International Arboretum and Garden

Interim Chair's Report

Welcome you to your first edition of our newsletter. I am delighted to say many developments have occurred since our last general meeting in November.

Although you have not heard from me over the Christmas and New Year period there has been a great deal happening behind the scenes in preparation for our AGM launch and the future path for "Friends" is becoming quite clear.

As you will see in this and future editions, I will welcome all stakeholders involved in the CIAG to contribute to the newsletter. This will inform all readers as to what is happening on the hill throughout the year.

I believe our Friends group can play a very active role in supporting the community as well as supporting the Arboretum. For this reason I have approached Carers ACT to offer a partnership arrangement with them regarding the funds raised from our annual major event. Friends will offer one third of funds raised from this event to this organization.

Carers are a generic organization working throughout the community with all age groups, and FCIAG is proud to be associated with this group.

We have just become incorporated, and we are currently considering a possible long term permanent location for a display centre and an office. (This will be dependant on finalization of an agreement with NCA). Friends is also planning to establish a volunteer program which will involve a range of different hands on volunteer groups.

A logo for the Friends has been designed as you can see on our front cover, and response regarding its design has been very positive.

Our first AGM is at the end of March, with our guest speaker to be Alex Smart, who was instrumental in forging a very active group as the first Chairperson of the Friends of Botanic Garden in Cranbourne, Melbourne. He will speak on the development of that Friends group and the very important involvement of volunteers within the group. Our first event for this year will be at Floriade, and the opening of Stage One of the CIAG in September 2008, and plans are in place for a major fund raising event in March, 2009. We are planning on 3 general meetings a year, with three newsletters produced each year.

Canberra has been blessed with rain this season which has certainly helped the growth on the hill. It is important to remember any planting on this site is research specific and all stock planted will be subjected to ongoing data collection and varied growing techniques to assist in maximizing the success of growing endangered and significant trees throughout this long term project.

I look forward to seeing you at our AGM,

Cheers for now,

Sherry McArdle-English

Inaugural Annual General Meeting

Tuesday 25 March 2008 at 7.00pm

Eastlake Football Club, Oxley St, Griffith

Light Refreshments will be served.





Regional conservation group supports CIAG.

By Cathy Robertson, President, Southern Tablelands Ecosystems Park.

STEP is a founding organisation of the Friends of CIAG. We are a local group of creative conservationists with a focus on Southern Tablelands' Ecosystems. STEP stands for Southern Tablelands Ecosystem Park. We are working closely with Sherry McCardle-English, to provide regional community support for the CIAG. David Shorthouse, STEP's vice president, is a founding member of Friends of CIAG's committee.

STEP was founded in late 2002 by the Australian Native Plants Society (ANPS) and Friends of Grasslands (FOG). We are an incorporated non-profit organization. Our vision is to develop a regional botanic garden representing the ecosystems of the Southern Tablelands and emphasising ground-storey plants. We also hope to increase public awareness about regional ecosystems and help to develop practical skills and methods to restore natural landscapes. We are planning an exciting display and narrative about the southern tablelands, its forests, woodlands, wetlands, wildflowers and grasslands, for our portion of the CIAG.

STEP Membership is open to any organisation, families and individuals who share its vision. Our website is: www.STEP.asn. Information about STEP and membership forms are available on our web site.

John Nightingale (our landscape designer) drafted our initial STEP concept plan for Block

100 and we submitted it for consideration to CIAG in July 2007.

Since then, STEP has held a number of discussions around our plan with the landscape architects for CIAG. In the course of these discussions, STEP has been offered a much larger area of the Arboretum about 6 hectares in total. Warren Saunders (Seeds and Plants Australia) produced a second Concept Plan for the larger area, taking account of comments received on the first plan. We are working with CIAG's project manager towards acceptance by TCL and the PCG of the STEP design.

STEP made a submission to ACTPLA (and the NCA) in November 2007 to include in the STEP project a piece of high quality natural woodland that lies adjacent to the arboretum on the eastern edge of the proposed Molonglo development. Our submission is supported by CIAG and is under consideration.

STEP attended the ceremony marking the partnership between the ANU and the CIAG, to establish an area for ANU Forestry to grow Eucalyptus. We feel that STEP's display will harmonise well with the ANU's project.

While the STEP project has been a long time in coming to fruition, we hope we will have some finality soon about its contribution to CIAG.



So where's the bloody water coming from ???

(By John Mackay AM, Arboretum Friend and CEO, ActewAGL)

After such a long drought and lengthy water restrictions, Canberrans are understandably worried that the Arboretum will reduce our scarce water resources.

My response is as follows:

Firstly, most of the trees we are planting need very little watering during their infancy and virtually no watering after they are established – most of the trees on the hills surrounding Canberra have survived the drought perfectly well on rainfall alone;

Secondly, we have adopted best practice gardening techniques, including mulching, to minimise the need for water and to protect the soil moisture;

Thirdly, there will be NO potable water connected to the site for anything other than drinking;

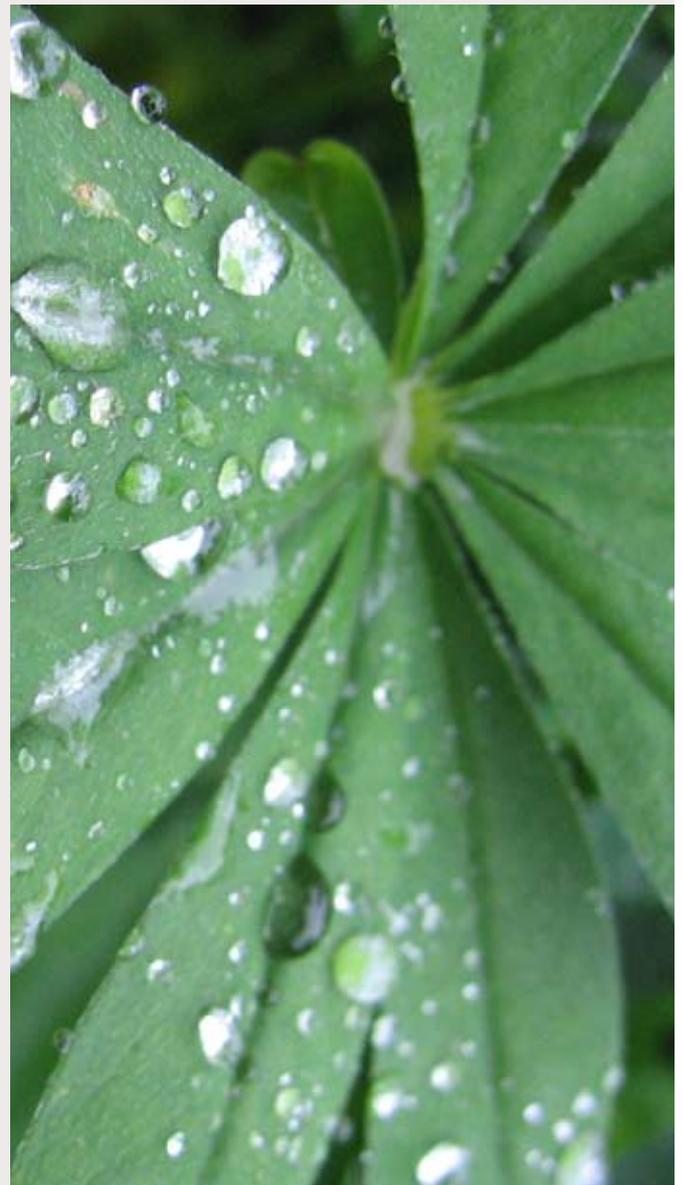
Fourthly, all trees are currently watered from on-site tanks. These are being filled by recycled water trucked from the Lower Molonglo Water Quality Control Centre;

Fifthly, in the medium term, we will extract water from an on-site bore (already in place) and a 42 million litre dam (which is out to tender for construction near the front entrance over the next few months); and

Finally, in the longer term, ACTEW proposes to run a major recycled water pipe right past

the arboretum to meet the needs of the new Molonglo Valley development. It will be possible to take recycled water from that pipe...or to extract recycled water from a major sewerage trunk pipe that is within 400 metres of the Arboretum boundary.

I hope that this response allays the concerns about water, or at the very least, provides a factual base for informed debate.





A NATIONAL BONSAI AND PENJING COLLECTION DOWN UNDER

By Grant Bowie and Roger Hnatiuk

One of the first 'Gardens' at CIAG will be the 'bonsai garden', which was flagged amongst the design competition winners for the site. The bonsai garden will now be officially known as the National Bonsai and Penjing Collection of Australia, or informally amongst bonsaiists as 'the National Collection'.

A permanent, public, bonsai collection within a national arboretum has a strong precedent in the United States National Arboretum in Washington, D.C., where the National Bonsai and Penjing Museum is housed. That collection started in 1976 and contains a mixture of major donated trees, hundreds of years old from Japan, as well as a collection of contemporary trees of both exotic and 'native' species created by artists in the 20th century.

The development of bonsai as an art form in Australia began at least at the beginning of the 20th century. Bonsai artists from China are known to have imported and grown trees from the early 1900s in Sydney. It was not until the second half of that century that bonsai became widespread in this country and now many thousands of people are involved in the art and craft of bonsai.

The Collection will officially open its doors on the 28th of September 2008. It is a joint project between the Government of the ACT and the bonsai community of Australia. It is being managed by a Bonsai Management Committee consisting of seven people from across the country, plus a Curator and a representative of the government.

The permanent home will be on the side of the Event Terrace, which will have dramatic views over Lake Burley Griffin towards the centre of Canberra. It will open in a temporary location and then move to the Arboretum, once the visitor centre and associated facilities have been built.

The display will highlight the diversity of influences that have shaped Australian bonsai and the factors that have governed the range of plant material available here. Visitors will be able to see excellent representatives of black pines, maples, spruces, cherries and zelcovas. Also, a significant proportion of the collection will be created from Australian native material, including eucalypts, acacias, melaleucas, tea-trees and araucarias. The work of Australian potters will be represented as well.

All the bonsai on display will be the creations of artists working in Australia. Because of plant quarantine regulations that protect our agriculture and forestry industries, as well as the native vegetation and fauna, it is not possible to import nor to accept gifts of historically significant trees being offered from overseas.

Grant Bowie, Interim Curator of the Collection, can be contacted on g.m.bowie@bigpond.com, and Roger Hnatiuk is the Chairman of the Bonsai Management Committee (rjhniuk@yahoo.com.au).



Fig 1.
Dwarf Alberta spruce (*Picea glauca* "albertiana conica")
Height 105cm
A cultivar of presumed natural hybrids between white spruce and Engelmann spruce from the Rocky Mountains of North America. These trees have been in bonsai training for over 50 years.

Donated by a consortium of supporters of the Collection
Artist: anonymous



Introducing Friends of the ACT Arboreta (FACTA)

FACTA was formed after the bushfires of 2003 when someone in the then ACT Environment suggested that a "Friends of ..." could help to provide expertise to assist in managing Bendora Arboretum (the only one of the upland arboreta to survive the 2003 fires). At first we concentrated on measuring the trees in the burnt out arboreta as a way of putting a full stop to many years of experimentation. In July 2005, an interim constitution was accepted thereby giving a structure to what had been a loosely organised group of enthusiasts.

The objects of FACTA are to "Foster the good management, and appreciation of the values, of arboreta in the Canberra region; these arboreta may include both native and exotic species, and significant and notable trees." (Relevant values include those of a scientific, interpretative, heritage, aesthetic and educational nature.)

Ways in which we can meet these objects include: assisting in and making proposals for the management of arboreta in the Canberra region, arranging or facilitating activities for the enjoyment and appreciation of arboreta, cooperation with other organisations and individuals, and representations, e.g. to government bodies; observing, recording and communicating how different tree species perform under different conditions; enhancing the heritage values of tree plantings; monitoring established trees and tree plantings.

So you can see that FACTA has assumed a rather wide mandate, but cooperating with like-minded bodies is high on the agenda so it would be remiss of us not to liaise closely with Friends of the CIAG. I am looking forward to working closely with you.

Tony Fearnside (President FACTA)

Project Update

The next phase of the civil works at the Arboretum will include the preparation of roads, a dam and the planting of up to nine forests. The contract package is currently going through the tender process.

The existing plantings are involved in the developing research projects with the ANU and it is expected that this provide much useful longitudinal data over the years to come.

Plantings to date and in progress include:
 Wollemia nobilis (Wollemi Pine)
 Eucalyptus benthamii (Camden White Gum)
 Quercus engelmanni (Mesa Oak)
 Quercus macrocarpa (Burr Oak)
 Ginkgo biloba (Gingko)
 Sequoidendron giganteum (Giant Sequoia)
 Cupressus atlantica (Moroccan Cypress)
 Cupressus sempervirens stricta (Roman Cypress) (to re-establish the historic plantings on Roman Cypress Hill)
 Dracaena draco (Dragon Tree)

A rigorous selection process is underway to select the trees for the next round of plantings.

Based on information provided by Chief Minister's Department



A SITE WITH HISTORY

The 250 hectare site for the Canberra International Arboretum and Gardens has a history as interesting as that of the developing capital. As we move towards the Centenary of Canberra it is important to provide information about this history of the evolving development of the Canberra International Arboretum and Gardens.

While the current project arose from the ashes of the fires of January 2003, the actual vision for an arboretum on this site comes from the original winning plans for the development of Canberra prepared by Walter Burley Griffin and Marion Griffin, almost a century ago. The Griffins' vision included an international arboretum on the shores of the lake as part of the city's richness and beauty.

Prior to the Griffins' plan, the area had a pastoral history and an Aboriginal history. Some scatter sites have been logged in the heritage records through recent years ensuring the thousands of years of history are duly recorded.

With the design for Canberra, the Griffin's also envisaged a large-scale, international arboretum with areas on the north and south of the lake planted with trees from the various continents - the layout derived from the Gondwanaland Theory of continental drift. This element of their design is only now being progressed but the spirit of creating arboreta was shown in the numerous small arboreta in the ACT which were created for scientific, forestry and horticultural purposes. Over time, many of these arboreta also became a recreational resource. Only three arboreta remained after the 2003 fires; the Bendora Arboretum in the upland region, the Westbourne Woods Arboretum at Yarralumla and the Lindsay Pryor National Arboretum at

the western edge of the lake next to the CIAG site. In the intervening years the site itself was largely planted to a commercial crop of *Pinus radiata* (Radiata or Monterey Pine).

The site also includes the historic Cork Oak plantation - it is well worth a visit to see these over 80 year old trees and to appreciate how the various forests currently being planted could look in 80 years time.

As well the site includes a significant planting of *Cedrus deodora* (Himalayan Cedar) - most of this current stand dates from 1928 and, like the Cork Oaks, it is well worth a visit.

Another piece of history arises from the remnant of Cypress Hill that is within the site. Most of the Roman Cypress (*Cupressus sempervirens* var. *italica*) on Cypress Hill (on either side of the Tuggeranong Parkway) were lost in the fires however plants grown from seeds collected from the original trees in 1992 have now been planted to replace the stands originally planted by Weston.

This is only a small part of the history of the site and provides an opportunity for me to ask you for some information. Can anyone tell me why Dairy Farmers Hill (the tallest point within the CIAG site) has that name? So far my researches have not found an answer. Please send any information to me at hackman@grapevine.com.au and I will be able to let everyone know in the next newsletter.

Jocelyn Plovits
preliminary secretary

(This article is based on information drawn from The Griffin Legacy, National Capital Authority 2004, and the Canberra International Arboretum and Gardens - Design Ideas Competition 2004).



Can International Research Look Attractive?.

In December 2007, the Chief Minister of the ACT and the Vice Chancellor of the Australian National University signed a Memorandum of Understanding to develop a research program on the Arboretum site. This event was covered by TV and radio media and drew interest from around Australia.

The memorandum will support long term research on the potential reponse of eucalypt forests to climate change in Australia. In particular, we will be studying the various ways that eucalypt trees cope with or avoid drought stresses. The detailed and long-term measurement of about 8 ha of trees is a very rare opportunity and has attracted international interest and offers of support from as far away as Finland.

As well as providing scientific information on how our forests will cope with climate variation, the research site will also add to the aesthetics of the arboretum - the species we propose to use will provide > a dramatic mix of white smooth-barked trees and dark "iron-barked" trees.

Associate Professor Cris Brack outlined the research proposal to the inuagural Friends meeting in September 2007 and would be happy to provide further informtion.

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FRIENDS of the CANBERRA INTERNATIONAL ARBORETUM and GARDENS

Membership Application Form

Yes, I/we wish to become a Friend(s) of the Canberra International Arboretum and Gardens

1. Title..... First Name..... Last Name

2. Title..... First Name..... Last Name

Address.....

.....Postcode.....

Tel (h) (w).....

e-mail.....

Membership arrangements (please indicate)

- Friend.....no cost
- Contributing Friend.....Single \$25
- Household\$30
- Contributing Concession\$20
- Association or Club.....\$50
- Corporate Friend\$2000

Payment details for contributing members:

Cash Cheque Credit Card

Cheques payable to the Friends of the Canberra International Arboretum and Gardens

\$..... Visa, Mastercard, American Express

Card no:.....

Card holders name.....

Expiry date: / Signature.....

For any enquiries contact

Jocelyn Plovits

Secretary

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