



FRIENDS OF THE CANBERRA INTERNATIONAL ARBORETUM AND GARDENS (CIAG) INC

D A T E S E P T E M B E R 2 0 0 9 | V O L U M E 5

Dear Friends, Greetings everyone! What a busy first few months of my Chairpersonship and our new Council it has been – it is really pleasing to be building on Sherry's very fine work and to be working on new ventures involving us all in the development of the Arboretum.

Following consultation with members at our Annual General Meeting, and then the unanimous 'yes' vote at the General Meeting on 4 August, our Constitution has been amended – a copy of the new Constitution is enclosed with this newsletter or is available on our website at www.canberraarboretum.org.au.

The main change to note when you are talking to your friends about becoming a member of our Friends, is that there is no longer a category of 'free Friends' (although existing 'free Friends' can either choose to maintain this level of membership, or become another category of Friend). As well, the cost of 'concessional Friend' membership has dropped from \$20 to \$10.

Let's double the number of Friends this year! A copy of the application form is on the website or you can let Collete, our new Secretary, know if you need application forms. (Collette's contact details appear at the end of this newsletter).

Did you see the mail-out (ordinary and e-mail) telling you about all the opportunities for training and volunteer involvement over the next few months? The information is repeated

in this newsletter in case you missed it and you want to be involved. Being Friends of CIAG we are energised as spring and the warmer weather comes – just like the young trees progressing in our Arboretum!

Our display at Floriade 09 will be held in the Cottage this year. Last year we were in a marquee next to the Cottage. The entrance into the display area is from within the National Bonsai and Penjing Collection of Australia with the exit out of the 'front' door of the Cottage. This is a smaller area in which we will be able to have an up-dated DVD playing and up-to-date maps of the plantings. The display will include material from STEP and FACTA. This year our new task will be providing guided bus tours around the Arboretum on Sundays – bus tickets will be limited and we will ask all passengers for a gold coin donation to raise funds for the Friends.

Have you noticed that the banner of the newsletter changes with each issue? Each issue features a forest from the Arboretum and an article providing information about the featured forest. Read all about it and then take the opportunity to visit each forest.

Looking forward to seeing you at the Arboretum!

Jocelyn Plovits
Chair





REALLY MAKING PROGRESS!

How wonderful it is to let you know about the progress being made at the Canberra International Arboretum and Gardens. It is now easy to see some of the 20 new forests that have been planted and the roads, dam and related works, even if you are only driving past the site. Please remember that you can walk in on Sundays (between 10am and 4pm) and have a look for yourself. Of course, when you are involved in a Friends working bee you will be able to have a really good look at the detail.

In 2009 the Governing Board, in conjunction with the Project Team within Chief Minister's Department, has organised for:

- landscaping the entrance, the parking and the walkway at Dairy Farmers Hill
- the picnic area within the Himalayan cedars – paths including access for people with a disability, a viewing platform, tables and seats and a toilet block
- power to be connected into the site
- public art including 'Nest' by Richard Moffatt (purchased by ACTEWAGL) placed on Dairy Farmers Hill and 'Wide Brown Land' to be installed on a knoll overlooking the Parkway
- planning for a sculpture competition with a possible \$100,000 acquisition prize
- incorporation of the Xeriscape Garden from Weston as the Water-wise Childrens Garden
- landscaping of the Central Valley/ Commemorative Garden (see photo)
- re-opening of the National Equestrian Trail
- support for the Southern Tablelands Ecosystems Project plantings
- review of the Master Plan
- planning for on-site parking
- planting of at least 22 new forests in calendar year 2009
- planting of an additional 45 forests as the seed is successfully acquired and propagated.

Other developments include: opening of the negotiations to include the Lyndsay Pryor Arboretum in closer links to our Arboretum; managing the Murrumbidgee riparian zone at the southern side of the Arboretum; fostering the *Kurrajong* seedlings that are emerging on site; transplanting Grass trees (*Xanthorrhoea*) from the Cotter Dam expansion; maintaining a small well managed forest of *Pinus radiata* as part of the historic record of the site; plantings by Ambassadors such as the recent planting of the *Ginkgo biloba* by the Chief Minister and His Excellency, Mr ZHANG Junsai, Ambassador of the People's Republic of china and Madam YIN Guomei, on 10 June 2009; appointment of a bonsai expert; and sponsorship of forests, such as the *Quercus Palustris 'Freefall'* by the Institute of Engineers. And it does not stop here because looking to the future we have asked for concept designs for the visitors centre and café and the Bonsai and Penjing pavilion which will be located near the Childrens' Garden and we are negotiating for centenary funding for Canberra's birthday in 2013.

Thank you to the Friends for working with us to achieve these outstanding outcomes.

John Mackay AM
Chair
Governing Board



Central Valley Earthworks



BOARD ADOPTS FRIENDS' INITIATIVES

The Friends have been developing initiatives at the request of the Governing Board of the Canberra International Arboretum and Gardens – and it is with pleasure I can report that two of our initiatives were adopted by the Board at its June 09 meeting.

SEAT SPONSORSHIP PROGRAM - SUMMARY

The Seat Sponsorship Program offers the opportunity to sponsor a seat in the sensational, new Canberra International Arboretum and Gardens (the Arboretum). The Friends' task now is to develop the fine detail to implement the program. It is planned to submit the final details to the Board in October 09.

Seats mark places to take a moment or more to appreciate the forests and gardens and appreciate the views. Seats provide much needed places to rest, since the site is large and not everyone using them will be in exceptionally good physical health. Seats can also be places for entertainment including corporate events and picnics. They are also places that could feature one or more metal recognition plaques for a sponsor or a person recommended by the sponsor. By allowing more than one plaque per seat, a range of price options can be offered to potential sponsors and similarly different options could be based on the materials used in seats, granite being more expensive than wood.

The Seat Sponsorship Program allows people or organisations (including firms) to sponsor a seat that features a recognition plaque: to recognise someone special; a special event like a wedding or a birth; or to recognise a sponsoring organisation. It is a thoughtful way to provide recognition while providing support to the Arboretum.

The recommended costs of the seats are as follows:

- \$5000 to sponsor a new seat for 10 years with a single plaque.
- \$2000 to extend the usable period of an existing seat for 10 years, or a lesser period if the condition of the seat becomes un-repairable.
- \$1000 per plaque to sponsor a seat with up to five plaques for 10 years.
- Sponsorship covers part or all of the cost of the seat, the plaque, and the maintenance for 10 years.

Placement of seats

As the detailed design for various areas of the Arboretum and its gardens is developed, locations within the site will be identified for seats. A map of potential sites can be provided. Sponsors can request a seat site and mark their first and second preferences on the map. Sponsors will be contacted to confirm seat placement and delivery date. Friends and family and/or guests are welcome to be present when the seat/plaque is placed. If the sponsor seeks to hold an event this will need to meet the event guidelines set by the Arboretum.

Administration Seat sponsorship Program

This will be a very interesting and key fundraising program which will be administered by the Friends under contract to the Arboretum entity when it is formed.

TREE DATA PROJECT - SUMMARY

Given that it is important that the collection of information, and availability of information, is systematic and verifiable, the Friends offered, on a voluntary basis, to compile tree information into a database and perhaps a handy booklet, both of which can easily be used and up-dated from time-to-time.



The project will:

- Gather, into a readily accessible form and location, a set of notes, covering a wide diversity of information about the 100 Forests 100 Gardens project, to use as the basis for ongoing production of information products.
- Capture the growing amount of information about the forests generated in the course of selecting species, including, but not necessarily limited to:
 - assessing them scientifically, including likelihood of successful growth in Canberra's climate and the soils of the site, potential for weediness, rare or endangered status etc.;
 - sourcing propagation material (provenance);
 - landscape design of each forest;
 - special purpose trees originating from ceremonial occasions as well as being the focus of building relationships with the diplomatic community;
 - planting date and subsequent follow up arboricultural maintenance (e.g. thinning and pruning regimes used, pest and disease control, replacements, weediness monitoring).
- Incorporate the ancillary, referenced information about the forests found by the Friends and derived from a variety of sources (expert knowledge, websites likely to provide quality information, published material etc.).
- Contribute measurement and other data about the trees as they are growing.

Outcome

The project will produce a single source of historic and current information about each forest that can be used by all who need information about the forests. Additionally, it should see the development of a process for maintaining the currency of information in the database.

Work has commenced

The Friends initiated this project because having accurate information is important to our credibility when we are working as volunteer guides and informing the community. It has emerged that our initiative is very much welcomed by the Chief Minister's Department Project Team and the Board because it helps to build the very data that will be useful for research and education into the future.

Summarised by Jocelyn Plovits from papers prepared for the Governing Board of the Canberra International Arboretum and Gardens by the Council of the Friends.

Have you let us know your e-mail address and/or any other changes to your contact details? Please contact Collette on mob: 0418 412 640 or e-mail us at hackman@grapevine.com.au



FRIENDS AT THE JUNE WORKING BEE AMONGST THE *Washingtonia filifera* (CALIFORNIAN FAN PALM)

The plastic guards had to be removed because it was feared they could cause problems with increased humidity. The mulch had fallen in against the trunks and this was considered undesirable, so Friends were raking it away from the trunks. The stakes that had held the plastic guards had to be removed. Multiply all this out by more than six hundred and you see why the Arboretum needs Friends - many hands make light work.





TREES IN FOCUS

This newsletter features the ***Washingtonia filifera*** (American cotton palm or Californian fan palm) in the banner.

The genus ***Washingtonia*** has two species: the Mexican fan palm (*Washingtonia robusta*) and American cotton palm (*W. filifera*) which is native to south western North America where its natural distribution in oases which are disappearing through loss of habitat. The American cotton palm is regarded as a remnant species but it has been widely cultivated in USA as an ornamental tree though not as widely as *W. robusta*. Its conservation status is 'locally rare not threatened' according to the IUCN red book.

It is tolerant of hot climates and temperatures as low as -10° C. The seed was eaten by North American Indians as well as a wide range of animals and the large leaves have been used for thatch and basket making.

The generic name honours George Washington, President of the United States, and *filifera* comes from Latin: 'thread-bearing'.

The palms have been planted high on a ridge to minimise frost exposure. The trees are fast growing and have massive grey, ring-marked trunks topped with numerous large fan-shaped leaves. As you can see from the following picture, the palms will provide considerable interest depending on how the palms are maintained over time and as they mature.

Last newsletter, the ***Eucalyptus benthamii*** (Camden white gum) was featured in the banner.

This is one of Australia's vulnerable native tree species because there are so few individuals in the wild: it occurs naturally on river flats in only three or four places in New South Wales, one of which is near Camden, hence the common name. The natural population of this species is probably less than 7000 individuals, so that it is in danger of extinction and in-breeding in the smaller stands.

Forest scientists have recognised the tree's potential as a plantation species for timber production and environmental benefits. It has been grown successfully in trials in China and South Africa as well as in Australia and is the subject of a tree breeding program that was started by the CSIRO and others. Taxonomic classifications put Camden white gum as closely related to *Eucalyptus viminalis* which typically occurs along water courses in the ACT.

It has grown rapidly in the Arboretum and may grow up to 40m tall and live for more than 150 years. It is planted in curving lines which will provide an eerie effect as you walk through the white tree trunks. This tree has considerable potential for parkland plantings.

Information for these articles was provided by Mr Tony Fearnside (President FACTA) and Mr Mark Richardson (Consultant to the Arboretum project).



W. filifera at the Botanic Gardens, Adelaide



OPPORTUNITIES

Spring, Floriade and the warmer weather will bring plenty of opportunities for volunteers. Training sessions will be available for new volunteers and to update knowledge about this rapidly changing project - it is really exciting to see so much progress.

Training sessions were held on 30 August 2009 at the Temporary Visitors centre at the Arboretum. Twelve people attended the first session which was for new members and 25 people attended the second session which provided all volunteers with up-to-date information on the new tree species being planted as well as the finer points of being a bus guide. Congratulations to all who attended.

You can be a volunteer for one or more of the following activities:

1. **Arboretum display at Floriade**
Do you have a few spare hours between 9.00am and 5.00pm any day between (and including) 12 September 09 and 11 October 2009 to be an explainer at the display in the main room of the Cottage (next to the Bonsai display)?

Normal shifts will be 9.00am to 1.00pm, 12.00 midday to 3.00pm and 2.30pm to 5.00pm, so you could choose a normal shift or let us know what times you are available.
2. **Guide on bus tour** - there will be two buses leaving Floriade each Sunday commencing 13 September and finishing 11 October - one at 11.00am and one at 1.00pm. Each tour will go for about an hour and a half. This will be similar to the tours run during the Festival of the Forest 09. Visitors going on the tour will need to obtain a ticket from the Arboretum

display on the day. There will be a limited number of places for these gold coin donation tours. Would you like to be a guide for a bus tour?

STEP Event - Come along on **24 October at 2.00pm** to meet Dr David Shorthouse and Warren Saunders who will present information about progress on the STEP site. E-mail limestone@grapevine if you are coming to the event please

Working Bee Sunday 27 September 2009

We will be working with the Curator, Adam Burgess, in the **Wollemi Forest** and, as usual, apart from this exclusive opportunity to assist the growth of one of the rarest trees in the world, there will be a sumptuous morning tea to finish.

Tree Data Project

We have organised, with the support of the Board and in collaboration with the Chief Minister's Departmental Project Team, for the Friends to collect tree data in terms of written material and research, as well as participating in a specific program recording tree measurements. This project will be led by our Deputy Chair, Dr Roger Hnatiuk and volunteers will receive special training for both the research and for tree measurement programs. Those involved in the tree measuring will be able to go into the site on weekdays.

Members End of Year Party Sunday 22 November 2009

This will be a combination working bee and picnic for Friends - a family event - and a great time to celebrate the progress being made at the Arboretum, and the valuable support provided by the Friends. You can come to both the working bee and the picnic or to either - just let us know.

Please contact Jocelyn by e-mail on hackman@grapevine.com.au or 0406376711 to organise a place on the rosters and/or to indicate interest in participating in research or an event.



SHERRY MCARDLE-ENGLISH

Inaugural Chair, Sherry McArdle-English, planting her presentation tree - a Wollemi that she has named 'Friendship'. The tree was presented to her at the 09 Annual General Meeting when she stepped down as Chair.

Our thanks to our sponsor Yarralumla Nursery.





FRIENDS of the CANBERRA INTERNATIONAL ARBORETUM and GARDENS Inc.

Membership Application Form

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

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

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

Address.....

.....Postcode

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

e-mail.....

Membership arrangements (please indicate)

Contributing Friend.....Single \$25

Household\$30

Contributing Concession\$10

Association or Club.....\$50

Corporate Friend\$2000

not registered for GST

Payment details for contributing members:

Cash Cheque

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

\$.....

For any enquiries contact

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Secretary

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