

Papyrus

Newsletter of the Friends of Burnley Gardens

This edition

On a day like today, with sun shining and blue sky and bees buzzing in the blossom, it feels a whole lot different to the past week of grey and cold. We hope you find lots to read and enjoy in this winter edition of Papyrus: the Friends have been busy bees during the past few months. Don't forget to keep an eye on the FOBG website fobg.org.au/ for more details of our upcoming events!



Narcissus and Snowflake blooming in the Orchard Border



Student transport - 1955 style

Jane Wilson found this photograph of a Burnley student group on camp at Wilson's Promontory in 1955. A Bedford truck served as the college bus, and was fitted with an outsized canvas back to accommodate the group. A quote from A.P. Winzenried's *Green Grows Our Garden* (p.107) described how "Students like to recall those trips in the truck...the way in which the truck, narrow at the front, wide at the rear, could be driven through traffic, collecting the occasional wing-mirror, from a neighbouring car without their own driver even knowing it." We're a long way from our present day risk-averse, and documentation-heavy excursion conditions!

Save these dates!

Saturday 2 August

The Art of Espalier Workshop

Lecture, demonstration and hands-on workshop
with Chris England,
Merrywood Plants

10 am – 1 pm

Wednesday 13 August

FOBG Annual General Meeting and

Shifting big trees with a big tree spade and other techniques

with Matt Davis, Established Tree Transplanters

AGM 6 for 6.30 pm; Talk 7 for 7.30 pm

Sunday 31 August

Monster Spring Plant Sale

FOBG Propagation Group

10 am - 3 pm at the Burnley Campus

From the President

Michèle Adler

I'm writing from the Northern Territory where it is a sumptuous 32 °C every day. I've just finished riding on a pushbike from Tennant Creek to Darwin (1000 km) to celebrate the centenary of my grandfather's record-breaking ride from Adelaide in 1914. He did the trip in 28 days and 7 minutes - they sure made them tough in those days.

Things have been quiet at FOBG over the last little time as this year we will not run our traditional July Pruning Day event. Instead we had a very successful Jumbo Plant sale in June and another is scheduled for August 31.

Of course, we are still running tours and propagating plants so there is a lot of action behind the scenes.

Looking forward to seeing you all again at Chris England's espalier workshop on Saturday 2 August or later at the AGM on

Wednesday 13 August. Come along to the AGM and hear what the Friends have achieved over the last 12 months. Matt Davis from Established Tree Transplanters will also be speaking about "*Shifting Big Trees With a Big Tree Spade*".

Cheers,

Michèle



Michèle with the replica of her grandfather's record-breaking bicycle

In the Gardens

Andrew Smith

The Gardens are looking green and lovely at the start of winter, with the lawns and the few final deciduous trees providing a wonderful vista. As you walk past the Garden shelter, down the *Bergenia*-lined pathway, the fragrance of the pink flowering *Luculia* makes a lovely impression. The lush growth of summer is gone, with the vegetation in the ponds, and the willows around the pond margins being pruned for winter.

Of particular note this year in the Rose Garden is the white flowering Mexican Tree Daisy *Montanoa bipinnatifida*. Its towering stems topped with masses of brilliant white flowers, is very eye-catching, even from a distance. The Propagation Group is propagating a few of these for future plant sales.

I've had great enjoyment this winter from the fruit of the Chinese Lantern Plant (*Physalis alkekengi* var. *franchetii*). This species is a new addition to the orange and purple bed at the entrance gates to the field station (see images over page). Those of you with a keen interest in floral arrangements may already know



Clockwise, from top: Montanoa bipinnatifida in the Rose Garden, Physalis alkekengi var. franchetii on climbing frame in the orange and purple border, and the papery, bright orange fruits in close-up

these colourful fruit. The large, orange, papery “lanterns” (the size of a large egg) retain their orange colour for months after cutting, making them an excellent addition to dried flower arrangements. They go well with the “silver dollar” seed heads of the *Lunaria annua* (Honesty) that also keeps well as a dried arrangement.

A garden bed project is well under way at the new reception ramp of the main building. The existing lawn area on the east side of the ramp has been reshaped to provide a curved transition into the neighbouring eastern bed. An extension of the lawn area on the north side of the *Melaleuca* lawn will also help to integrate the new ramp into the landscape.

A new type of garden has been created on the north side of the ramp, the side facing the roundabout (Teardrop Lawn). This former bitumen area has been reshaped and dug out to create a rain garden. Rain gardens are planted beds containing a free draining, sand based growing medium, and that have a stormwater inlet from a roof or roadway (see <http://www.melbournewater.com.au/getinvolved/protecttheenvironment/raingardens/pages/what-is-a-raingarden.aspx>). An overflow outlet above the level of the growing medium allows for the removal of

excess water in the event of a torrential downpour that overwhelms the capacity of the rain garden. The idea is to allow stormwater to filter through the sandy soil to irrigate plants, rather than having it run directly into the stormwater system. Plants are carefully chosen to allow periodic water inundation or prolonged periods of drought. You might think this would be a tricky group of plants to find, but many native species are suitable. Kangaroo Paw and *Callistemon* species are highly adaptable to this feast and famine existence. The project should be finished by the end of winter and judging from the high probability of an El Niño event later this year, I'm sure the garden will see more drought than rainfall.

From the Membership Secretary

Cheryl Andrews

Since the previous Newsletter FOBG membership has increased to 256. Our numbers are growing through a combination of word-of-mouth, people attending the plant sales, and the many activities we organized or were involved with during the previous months.

I would like to welcome our newest members who are:

Jill Adams	Jan Barker and family (Garrick and Denholm Pickering), Beryl Black
Elly Corkill, Plinia Crea	Judith Dickson
Sarah Eastwood	Dr Deborah Glass, Virginia Gourley, Jill Greenland
David Hart, Annick Houle	Inge Jabara, Shona James
Catherine Knight	Peter Lee and family
Jennifer McDonald, Elaine Merton, Christine Morrissey	Rosemary Noone
Don and Petrushka Owen	Diane Penny, Charles Pritchard
Trish Sawrey, Jacquetta Sloane, Ivan & Angela Smith	Fiona Thompson
Niki Vergados	Rosemary & Ted Waghorne, Ken Widdowson, Sue Wilkins, Kathy Wright

We hope you enjoy your membership of the Friends and have many opportunities to take part in our activities!

Newsletter layout and photo credits

Photos in this edition came from Jan Chamberlain, Justine Curry, Sue Murphy and Andrew Smith.

Newsletter content collated by Jan Chamberlain; edited by Jan and Sue Murphy; layout by Sue.

Thanks as always to all our contributors! If you have any ideas for newsletter items, please email Sue (smmurphy@unimelb.edu.au).

FOBG – the year so far

Jan Chamberlain

Is it July already? How did that happen? It seems only yesterday that the Friends gathered on St Valentine's Day in the Pear Tree forecourt for a delicious meal prepared by Dianne Cranston. We were then treated to a journey through the horticultural industry, presented by Dawn Fleming. Dawn married nurseryman Don Fleming in 1958 and that was the start of her horticultural career. We heard about Dawn's involvement in fruit tree deliveries, photography, catalogue production and her writing for 'Your Garden' magazine. One of her catalogues earned a 'Best Nursery Catalogue in World' gong. Then there was Fleming's first display at Burnley and other field days – a far cry from the Fleming's 'Best in Show' (www.flemings.com.au) win at Chelsea! We also received a few lessons on fruit tree pruning. To close Dawn mentioned that she started the organisation *Encouraging Women in Horticulture* (www.encouragingwomeninhorticulture.com.au) to help other women in the horticultural industry.



Jess and Dawn Fleming



Peter and Beverley Narandja



Rob Lazarus and John Wilson



Liz Cooper and Rod McMillan



Jean Corbett and Judith Scurfield

In March we were inspired by Rod McMillan and Michèle Adler when they spoke on establishing a wetland on their property at Peach Flat in Gippsland (adland.com.au/peachflat.aspx). Previously the land had grazed cattle. They in turn had been inspired by the London Wetland Centre in Barnes (www.wwt.org.uk/wetland-centres/london) which was a public/private partnership. They partnered with a number of organisations including Landcare and applied for a grant which they were awarded. First came the assessments – soil, flora, fauna and topographic – then the design. The future

wetland was shaped and graded with the levels being checked daily to ensure the water would flow correctly through the ponds. The wetland opened in 2004 and three years later there was a flood which filled and overflowed the wetland. Schools, garden clubs, passers-by and environmental groups now visit and use the property. Management of weeds and feral animals is ongoing. Surprisingly there has been very little planting as the indigenous flora has returned since grazing ceased.



Michèle Adler and Rod McMillan



Andrew Smith, Ellie Bastow, Judy Carrigan



Anne Bishop and Jane Wilson

In May, Tim Hart entertained the Friends with an illustrated talk about the new home for the Ring-tailed Lemurs at the Melbourne Zoo. Tim is a Landscape Architect and Director of *Urban Initiatives*, who won the tender to design the new lemur enclosure. The lemurs are from Madagascar and the vegetation in the enclosure needed to reflect their homeland. Andrew Laidlaw and Michèle Adler were called in to advise on suitable plants for the area. The space is shared by humans and lemurs and is in a high profile position. One of the aims was to increase the amount of time that people spend at the exhibit (more than the current average of 20 seconds). The new entry tunnel incorporates an air lock and has a woven rattan covering. Some of the plants chosen to give the area the 'look' of Madagascar are *Erythrina vespertilio*, *Brachychiton acerifolius*, aloes and a *Ceiba*. Benches for the lemurs to do their 'yoga' were installed as well as tree houses

March = MIFGS

Jan Chamberlain

The Melbourne International Flower and Garden Show (MIFGS) is a fixture on the calendar for Victorian and interstate gardeners alike. This year, the University of Melbourne's display featured a modified shipping container with a green roof, vertical gardens and a vegetable rain garden. During the show, some Friends were spotted by the exhibit.



Sue Murphy (working – in the apron) and Fran Mason



Vertical garden (right) and string garden (inset)



Shipping container green roof, with borrowed landscape beyond

Perfumed plants

Michèle Adler

About forty people gathered in April to hear Teena Crawford's passionate and jam-packed talk about perfumed plants.

Teena is a third generation nursery woman, a former 3AW radio presenter and Burnley graduate, and she more than lived up to our expectations. The evening's topic was a broad-ranging one, but Teena brought masses of foliage, plants in pots and a slide presentation to illustrate her talk.

Pieces of plants started to circulate the room, with people inhaling the fragrance of the flowers of *Luculia grandifolia* and *Viburnum carlesii* or crushing and smelling the foliage of *Elettaria cardamomum* or Rosemary.

Many photos (both local and international) showed how each plant could be shown off as specimens, clipped, hedged or used as ground covers, whilst Teena explained their qualities of drought/frost resistance, adaptability to light conditions, leaf colour and growth habit and flowers, as if they were her best friends.

Her favourite group of autumn flowering fragrant plants are *Osmanthus*, including *O. heterophyllus* 'Purpureus' with just a plum tinge to the new growth, or *O. x fortunei* with its flowers providing a delicious pervading scent.

One of her surprises was the treatment of *Stephanotis floribunda* (grown from cuttings, not seed), climbing up wires on a north facing protected wall of her own home. This climber, native to Madagascar and usually seen in wedding bouquets, was performing magnificently in Melbourne.

At the end of the talk Teena was willing to sell her props and lots of people went home with something new for their garden. As for me, I'm going to try the deliciously sweet white *Rosa rugosa*, which is drought, frost and salt tolerant with disease-resistant foliage. Let's see if the prickles will deter the wallabies!!



L-R: Michèle Adler, Andrew Smith and Teena Crawford



One of Teena's (and Andrew's) favourite winter flowers, *Luculia gratissima*

Propagation Group Report

Glenys Rose

After a hectic summer of very successful sales we have been busy propagating to rebuild our stock. We have also started to move into a dedicated area set aside for us in the nursery. Our thanks go to Nick and Sascha, and to the nursery management group, for helping us reach this arrangement. It is definitely a work in progress but we will eventually have an area that meets all our needs so we don't impinge on the University's activities.

We sowed another crop of acorns from the Gallipoli Oak at Geelong Grammar. Some of you will have seen John Fordham on the ABC news regarding this project. For more information visit

www.nationaltrust.org.au/vic/GallipoliOaksProject

(Note from Jan: the Gallipoli Oaks were featured on the National Trust stand at this year's Melbourne International Flower and Garden Show – see image at right.)

The Propagation Group ran a fabulous sale on June 10, which attracted a number of people who had never been to Burnley before. Sales and attendance were remarkable for a midweek winter's day! Our grateful thanks to Sandra McMahon and Cheryl Andrews for their excellent work in advertising this activity. Several people expressed interest in joining the Friends and asked about the courses run on campus so we continue to act as an important conduit between the Uni and the public.

Two of our volunteers have reached the happy situation where they now have too much paid work to keep

helping us. So if anyone would like to help out we meet most Tuesdays at 1:00pm. We are willing to teach you on-the-job, so to speak, but some horticultural background would be ideal. We are a very friendly group and have a lot of fun while doing something worthwhile. Please contact Andrew Smith so we can follow up on your interest.

Until next time may you and your gardens enjoy a well-deserved break as winter finally descends.



And finally...

...another student group, also on camp at Wilson's Promontory in 1954. The Principal, T.H. Kneen and his whole family came too.

This image comes from a collection of photographs donated by Justine Curry (née Mitchelson) who graduated in 1954.

