

*Friends of the
Botanic Gardens of Adelaide*



Gazette



Euphorbia pulcherrima Photo: Bill Dowling

**January 2007
Volume 30 No 1**

Benefits of membership of the Friends of the Botanic Gardens of Adelaide

Free entry to the Bicentennial Conservatory; four issues each year of the Friends Gazette; quarterly evening or late afternoon meetings with specialist speakers on garden- and plant-related topics; and opportunities to participate in daytime outings and interstate and overseas tours to gardens, conferences and other related events.

A 10% discount on all FULL PRICE items at the Botanic Shop in the Gardens.

Discounts on selected purchases at participating plant nurseries, garden centres and retail outlets as follows:

- Antique Garden – Main Road, Woodside – 10% discount
- The Atrium Garden Centre – 291 Payneham Road, Royston Park – 10% discount
- Blows Nursery – Sturt Valley Road, Stirling – 10% discount on plants
- Catt's South Coast Nursery – 38 Adelaide Road, Victor Harbour – 10% discount
- Cleveland Nursery - 91 Mt Barker Road, Stirling – 10% discount on plants
- The Conservatory – 80 Unley Road, Unley - 10% discount on plants
- Discs Delivered – (08) 8277 4182; 0412 091 080 (ddtechnology@chariot.net.au) - 5% discount on parts, peripherals and computer systems
- Elite Picture Framing – 32 Croydon Road, Keswick – 10% discount on framing, digital camera images including stretching photos onto canvas.
- A Garden Gallery – Walkerville Flowers, 67 Walkerville Terrace, Walkerville – 10% discount (excluding floral arrangements).
- Heyne's Nurseries – 278 The Parade, Beulah Park – 10% discount
- Ibis Siding Garden Centre – Cadell Street, Goolwa – 5% discount
- Lockleys Garden Centre – 334 Henley Beach Road, Lockleys – 10% discount on plants
- Perfumed Garden – 559 Portrush Road, Glenunga – 10% discount on plants
- Pots and Palms Garden Centre – 205-207 Tapleys Hill Road, Seaton – 10% discount
- The Southern Native Plant Nursery – Chalk Hill Road, McLaren Vale – 10% discount.

Use your membership card and save!

**FRIENDS OF THE BOTANIC
GARDENS OF ADELAIDE INC.**

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Marjorie Jackson-Nelson
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8269 7251

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8267 4459
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Ex-officio –

BGA Director: Stephen Forbes
Craft Group: Kym Bracco,
8449 8135
Guide Officer: Henry Krichauff, 8332
3223

North Lodge: Helena Jenkinson,
8326 0768

Botanical Art: Cathy Veide,
8382 6421

Growing Group: Richard Rowland,
8260 1742

Gazette: (vacant)

FBGA office –

Administrative Officer – Stephanie
Brown 8222 9367

Office hours – 9am to 5pm
Wednesday through to Friday.

Cover: *This Poinsettia, Euphorbia pulcherrima, is now flowering in the Classground. It also appears on the cover of the newly-published book 'Botanical Riches'.*

**First 2007 general
meeting will be in
early February**

Ed McAlister, former Zoo Director and a Friend of the Botanic Gardens of Adelaide, will speak at the FBGA's first general meeting for 2007 on Tuesday, February 6, at the Noel Lothian Hall.

The topic has not yet been decided but it will be about his travels as a Zoo Chief Executive and it will have strong botanical themes.

2007 CALENDAR (to date)

Tuesday, February 6:

General meeting at 7.30pm Noel Lothian Hall, Ed McAlister as guest speaker

Wednesday, February 7:

Morning video – 'Australian Rose Gardens' – and Gardens walk, 9.30 am Noel Lothian Hall

Wednesday, February 28:

Garden Guide training commences, 9.30 am

Wednesday, March 7:

Visit to Artlab Australia, 11 am, then optional light lunch

Sunday, March 25:

Melbourne Flower Show Tour departs

September:

Second plant collecting expedition to Guyana, South America

October 20:

Norfolk Island Tour departs

President's report

From Lesley Hawkins

This year has been one of great changes and challenges both for the Friends and within the Gardens themselves. We have seen the closure of the North Lodge Shop and the opening of the new Botanic Shop, Café Fibonacci, the Schomburgk Pavilion and the Mediterranean Garden.

A number of Friends have been involved in strategic planning sessions under the direction of Leanne Muffett, whose time was contributed by the Gardens. These sessions have proved most worthwhile and interesting, in examining the role of the Friends in the Gardens, our social activities, financial planning and the future directions of the Friends. We are grateful for the support of the administration team in these discussions.

One decision affecting us greatly has been that of the on-going use of North Lodge. It has been decided to use the Lodge as a resource centre for volunteers in the Gardens, and it may eventually cater for other groups which volunteer of their time here. The Friends have been able to move our book collection from the Botanic Gardens library into the front room of the Lodge, offering much greater accessibility for reference and research to Guides and other Friends. The Guides have moved their 'show and tell' collection into the Lodge, along with their reference and walk materials. Several open days and two exhibitions, one by our own Botanic Art Group and another from Basketry SA, have enabled us to trial North Lodge as a display space, and the response has been encouraging, with most people very pleased with the way the Lodge has been presented.

It has been decided that North Lodge will be open several weekdays for Friends to access the book collection, and a roster of volunteers, to check books and provide information, is being organised.



Friends President Lesley Hawkins (left) with Leonie Mathieson at the 'Botanical Riches' opening.

Photo: Julie Abbott

In the meantime, the Craft Group under the able direction of Kym Bracco continues to meet and work in the Lodge. The group has had several sales in conjunction with the Growing Group and will continue to look for suitable outlets for their lovingly crafted handiwork.

The Growing Group continues to work strongly at Mt Lofty, and sales are being held regularly at both Mt Lofty and Adelaide Gardens. A camera has recently been purchased, and is enabling the use of more photographic information at plant sales. Thanks to Richard Rowland as convenor.

The Guides, under Henry Krichauff, are, as usual, very busy with daily walks and booked tours, as well as offering some new special walks, such as the walk showcasing plants depicted in the beautiful Margaret Preston Exhibition at the Art Gallery, and the current walk supporting the Botanical Riches exhibition in our Museum of Economic Botany. A group of hardworking Guides continues to publish the much-valued monthly plant trail for visitors to the Gardens, while another group is well along the way in organising the Australian Guide Conference here in September, 2007. Once again, the majority of Guides supported the Garden on World Environment Day, when many hundreds of school children visit us.

The Botanical Art Group, under the leadership of Cathy Veide, has been producing some beautiful work and displayed some of this in an exhibition in North Lodge in November. Cathy has been instrumental in having the Rosa Fiveash Medal struck which will be used in future art displays. The group has also produced the very pretty pansy calendar and the bookmarks displayed for sale.

The Tours Group has continued to offer a wonderful range of day trips, video mornings and talks, and held a most successful trip to the Yorke Peninsula. Many thanks to the committee and particularly to Anne Hastings. They have worked tirelessly to give so much pleasure to our members.

Changes to Gazette

The Gazette is about to undergo some changes. Our editor, Pat Pelham, has decided to retire after some years of dedicated service. A new committee will explore possible new directions for the Gazette, as well as the introduction of a newsletter which will keep members up to date with news, activities and reminders of events, in between Gazettes. I must also thank the group of people who work so hard behind the scenes, in getting the Gazette and its inserts into envelopes and into our letterboxes.

A number of our members are also now volunteering at the Visitor Information Centre under the direction of Katrina Nitschke, and are finding that activity most rewarding and interesting.

All of these activities involve time freely given to support the Gardens. We have not been able to give as much financial support this year as in the past, but are still seeing some results in that area. Richard Aitken's beautiful book *Botanical Riches* was published with a \$5,000 contribution from the Friends, and the committee is currently discussing supporting the exhibition financially. The long-awaited 150th anniversary *History of the Botanic Gardens of Adelaide* has been published and a \$40,000 donation from the Friends was given to support that work.

In lieu of a cash donation to the Gardens library this year, Tony Kanellos selected a number of books from North Lodge stock to supplement their collection. We also used the Gwen Thomas Bequest, which gives a \$3,000 bursary annually to a horticultural member of staff, to send Elizabeth Pillman on a study tour to Kew Gardens, UK.

Also, \$10,000 has just been paid to the Gardens 150 appeal as the second instalment of our pledge in that area.

Bequests to the Friends this year have included donations from Audrey Abbie and the estates of Betty Westwood, Noel Lothian and others. We are most grateful for their very kind thoughts.

Twilight meetings

Other interesting activities this year have included several twilight meetings, with drinks and nibbles, great speakers and home for dinner; a display at the State Flora 120th celebration at Belair National Park; the publication of a brochure *Birds common to the Adelaide Botanic Gardens* beautifully put together by Stan Ryan and about to be put on to the education website by Steve Meredith; a great Friends Conference held at Cranbourne Victoria and attended by a few members of our committee; the Volunteer Thank You high tea at the Wine Centre which the Gardens held to thank the very hard working volunteers from the North Lodge Shop.

And that brings me back to the huge changes that have taken place for us this year. We need to remind ourselves that the Shop was not there for us when the Friends began but we still have the same aims of fostering interest in the Gardens and supporting the Gardens with funds to the best of our ability. This is something which I am sure we will all continue to do.

Thank you to all our loyal members – none of our plans, or our many and varied activities, would be possible without your commitment and support.

I would particularly like to thank the members of the committee who have supported me so generously this year.

Thank you to Neville Bottger who runs our finances so soundly, and to

Nicky Fidler who leapt into the breach as secretary this year and has been just invaluable.

I wish you all health and happiness and look forward to seeing you in 2007.

The following poem 'The Gardening Doctor' appeared in a British horticultural magazine:-

The Gardening Doctor

Do you suffer from PLUMBAGO
Is your back a little sore?
Or perhaps it's PYRACANTHUS
Which you caught in Singapore?
You've a nasty little HOSTA
Which I think I'll have to lance
And I notice a SPIREA
Has been leading you a dance!
Are you getting forgetful?
Is NEMESIA the cause?
Does your ANTIRRHINUM pain you
When you're walking out of doors?
You've had SKIMMIA RUBELLA
I can see that by your nose
And CORNUS CAPITOSA
Has played havoc with your toes!
How is your VIBURNUM TINUS?
Have you lost your sense of smell?
Use a SYRINGA REFLEXA
That should help to keep it well.
I'm afraid your MACROCARPUS
Isn't really up to scratch
And do avoid NIGELLA
It's a nasty thing to catch!
Still, I think you're doing nicely
Watch the QUERCUS in your knees
Take your BERBERIS twice nightly
Cheerio! Next patient please!

Anon

From the Director

By Stephen Forbes, Director, Botanic gardens of Adelaide and State Herbarium

Launch of Seeds of Change

The Friends of the Botanic Gardens of Adelaide gifted \$40,000.00 to the Gardens for an Illustrated history project as part of their 25th anniversary celebrations held in 2002. The Board agreed to match the FBGA gift of \$40,000 for the project. This joint funding, along with additional funds and staff resources from the Gardens, enabled the production of a quality book. The history, titled *Seeds of Change: An Illustrated History of Adelaide Botanic Gardens*, is a well researched and wonderfully illustrated book that has used the rich resources of the Gardens library and archival collections.

The launch of *Seeds of Change* was held on Friday, December 8, on the Palm House lawns. It was a day of extreme heat, which highlighted the importance of the role of the Botanic Gardens and the environmental challenges it faces during times of drought and water restrictions.

Dr Peter Goldsworthy, best-selling author and Chairman of the Libraries Board of South Australia, launched the book. Guests including the Premier Mike Rann, the Minister for Environment and Conservation, Gail Gago, directors of North Terrace and other cultural institutions, The Friends and relatives of past directors took comfort in the shade of the trees opposite the historic Palm House while author Richard Aitken told wonderful and quirky stories taken from *Seeds of Change* to whet the appetites of the guests. Most guests walked away with a signed copy and it is destined to be on the bookshelves of all supporters of the Gardens.

Amazon Waterlily Pavilion

The Amazon Waterlily Pavilion is progressing well, though the steel framework has not been able to be supplied before Christmas and will now not arrive until late January 2007.

Board of the Botanic Gardens of Adelaide & State Herbarium

Kym Winter-Dewhirst was appointed to the Board on December 14 to replace Mr Michael Subacius who resigned due to work commitments.

Gardens 150 update

The Gardens 150 Appeal continues to receive strong support from the community and corporate sectors. Since the inaugural meeting of the Appeal Planning Committee in May 2005 just over \$4 million in pledges has been received from a diverse range of donors against a target of \$5 million. This is a remarkable result and demonstrates that the Botanic Gardens of Adelaide

is not only one of the finest in the world but is a cherished institution that has enriched the lives of generations of South Australians. The Friends of the Botanic Gardens of Adelaide's continued support has been a contributing factor to the success achieved to date.

If you would like to make a personal commitment to the Appeal please contact the Appeal office on (08) 8431 5008 or through the Botanic Gardens 150 Appeal website at www.gardens150appeal.org

Garden Party

The October 26 cocktail Garden Party themed around Alice in Wonderland was a total success. On offer was an enchanting night of great food, great entertainment in Adelaide's very own wonderland, the Botanic Gardens. More than 220 guests attended and a lot of positive media attention for the Gardens followed .

2007 Guyana Expedition

Following the successful 2005 plant collecting trip to the Amazon region, the Botanic Gardens of Adelaide is coordinating a second plant collecting expedition to Guyana, South America, in September 2007. The expedition will focus on field-based collecting in the Kanuku Mountains and Rupununi River, continuing in the footsteps of Richard Schomburgk, second Director of the Adelaide Botanic Gardens and Guyana naturalist 1840-44.

This once-in-a-lifetime experience includes visits to the Kaieteur Falls, Karanumbu Ranch, Schomburgk Crag and the botanical sights of Miami. More details will become available by the next edition of the Gazette. Seeds of the *Victoria amazonica* collected from the wild in 2005 are currently being grown for display in the new Amazon Water Lily Pavilion.

The 'Gazette' 25 years ago ...

- **October/November/December 1981**

At a meeting in the Lecture Theatre, State Library, on October 6 Mr Malcolm Campbell, Manager of the Woods and Forests Department at Belair, will speak on 'Reforestation in Nepal'. Mr Campbell spent two years under the Australian Development Assistance Bureau in Nepal. He wrote a book on propagation, now in its second edition, and a standard text book, in Nepal.

- **April/May 1982**

Is this your last Gazette? It will be if your 1982 subscriptions have not been paid.

BOOK REVIEW:

ABG history succeeds on all counts

By Anna Cox

SEEDS OF CHANGE: An Illustrated History of Adelaide Botanic Garden by Richard Aitken – Bloomings Books 2006. Recommended retail price \$49.95; Friend's price at the Botanic Shop \$45.

At the launch of this excellent book on Friday, December 8, the author Richard Aitken said that he had tried to make it “lively and accessible”. He could have added “accurate” and be judged to have succeeded on all counts. The book is easy to read, full of interesting detail (some in the notes at the back) and is beautiful to look at.

It was Dr Brian Morley who first set this history in motion, having in mind the celebration of the ABG's sesquicentenary. A great deal of manoeuvring and discussion went on behind the scenes for several years.

To make the production possible the Friends, as the author acknowledges, donated a generous \$40,000 toward its publication and have reason to be immensely pleased with the result.

It has not been possible in the few days that have elapsed between the launch and the deadline for this Gazette to write a full review but in my quick scan I noticed only one omission. That was the 1983 production of *Flowering Plants in Australia* by Dr Morley and Dr Helmut Toelken – a widely acclaimed work of considerable scholarship. On the other hand the writer has managed to capture the essence of the Morley years, which I should have thought a particularly difficult task.

The subtitle of the book has drawn comment from some of the Friends who thought they were supporting a history of the Botanic Gardens of Adelaide rather than that of the ABG. However, considering the difference in length of the lives of each of the three gardens it is quite understandable that the focus was on the one having its significant birthday. As for the loss of the definite article – ‘the ABG’ or plain ‘ABG’ – history will be the judge.

Friends will find that they have supported an excellent endeavour; everyone, and especially the book's author, must be delighted with it.

Botanical Riches Exhibition opened by Nicki Downer

The exhibition **Temple of Flora – The Story of Plant Exploration**, currently open daily in the Museum of Economic Botany from 10 am to 4 pm, was opened on Thursday, October 19 by Nicki Downer AM.

The exhibition, which will run until February 25, has been inspired by Richard Aitken's book *Botanical Riches – Stories of Botanical Exploration* and is uniquely a joint exhibition with Carrick Hill Estate.

Richard Aitken, a Melbourne-based historian and architect, has produced a glorious book – an evocative history of plants in the form of short essays accompanying hand-coloured, lithographed and engraved botanical drawings and paintings from the 15th to the 19th centuries.

Carrick Hill's exhibition *Flora's Jewels – the Art of the Botanical Book* also commenced on October 19.



*Nicki Downer AM with Friends Committee member
Julie Abbott.*

Subscriptions to increase in stages

At its November 2006 meeting the Friends Committee resolved that for 2007 new members would pay \$5 more than the current membership rate while current members could renew at the current rate (\$30 per members and \$35 for a couple) for 2007. The new rate would apply to everyone in 2008.

It was further resolved that thereafter membership fees would be reviewed annually.

A view from the Zoo

By Ed McAlister AO

Many Friends will be aware that I joined the Botanic Gardens of Adelaide as the Horticultural Botanist in 1979 and in 1991 became the Assistant Director. A number of people were surprised when I left the Gardens in July 1991 to accept the position of Chief Executive Officer of the Royal Zoological Society.

Believe me, in those first few weeks I was also in something of a whirl and I had a very steep learning curve. I did however find quite a few similarities in the Board structures, which is not surprising given the fact that both organisations are more than a century old.

I joined the Adelaide Zoo, and indeed the 'zoo world', at a very interesting time. The zoos and aquariums of the world had realized quite some time previously that perceptions of zoo animals were changing and the other, more important, roles of zoos in conservation needed to be accelerated or emphasised.

Zoos had already begun to become more and more involved in field conservation work and were becoming seen, more and more, as repositories of important genetic material – a type of modern Noah's Ark and places to hold an 'insurance population' of a large number of the world's vanishing species.

It was not all that different really to the roles of Botanic Gardens, except that zoo charges tend to move around and are CERTAINLY sentient beings that can engender strong emotions, both positive and negative.

Complementary to field conservation is the role of conservation education. To achieve this we must display the animal in its natural setting and show that destruction of habitat is the greatest threat facing all of us.

To do this we need PLANTS and lots of them. Actually deciding what plants to use was easy, getting them to grow was fairly easy, but keeping the animals who share the exhibits from destroying them is a story for another time.

Many people have told me that in recent years the Adelaide Zoo has changed and I am very grateful for this feedback. I give credit to the excellent horticulture staff that we were able to attract.

Despite my long background with plants, I used to regularly stop dead as I walked around the Zoo and say WOW! as I looked at an area. It was not the 'hard landscape' – the concrete, glass and steel – that had impressed

me; it was the plantings and the plants themselves that brought me up short.

As many of you know I am now back in the Gardens one day each week, as a volunteer, sorting out Noel Lothian's photographic slides – a task I am enjoying immensely.

I look back across Botanic Park to the Adelaide Zoo and know that, despite its small size and heritage constraints, there is a wealth of enjoyment to be had there.

Not only is there an excellent collection of animals, but the plantings have helped to change the second-oldest zoo in Australasia from what it was to 'a green and pleasant place'.

Our visitors, staff and animal inhabitants are all the better for the changes; changes which I lay almost completely at the feet of PLANTS.

GARDEN GUIDE TRAINING 2007

- ARE YOU – Friendly and outgoing?
– Keen to meet and talk to all sorts of people?
– Passionate about plants and want to learn more?
– A lover of the Botanic Gardens?
– Fit enough to walk for 90 minutes at Mt Lofty or Wittunga?
– Free to attend training or meetings on Wednesdays?

If your answers were yes – become a Garden Guide. Training will start on Wednesday, February 28, at 9.30am and continue for 12 weeks.

For more information contact Helena Jenkinson on (08) 8326 0768.

The Gardens in times of water restriction

By Leith Yelland

Adelaide Botanic Gardens

The Adelaide Gardens rely on SA Water for supply, and negotiations have taken place with that authority as to the windows of opportunity during which the Gardens can draw water through its seven supply meters.

ABG Manager Dennis May points out that SA Water recognises the value of the Gardens to the community and the fact that strategies are in place to improve irrigation efficiency.

As a result it has been agreed that the Level 2 window of watering opportunity (8 pm to 8 am) be increased for the Gardens to 8 pm to 9 am and that this watering opportunity will continue with the Level 3 restrictions in place from January 1.

The Gardens are also not tied to alternative days nor the 'Monday for the Murray' concept. Theoretically this means the Gardens could water every day within the extended time frame although manual watering at the weekend is not an option. The Gardens have opted to observe the 'Monday for the Murray' model, with the option to water if needed.

Dennis May says that the Gardens are committed to modelling best irrigation practice but they still have a way to go. In 2000 a computerised irrigation controller was installed and most of the lawns and some of the garden beds are connected to that. It has been this system that has enabled them to water overnight and abide by the restrictions. The other areas of the gardens that rely on manual irrigation of course require staff and this has been a challenge.

A master plan was developed in 2004 that has the potential to put all the gardens under an automatic system. Without complete automation yet, water restrictions could however see the browning-off of some lawns. But it is clear that SA Water recognises the value of the Gardens as open space and a great place to be. Given its 150-odd year tradition any decision to further restrict water to the Gardens would be a very profound one.

(While the Gardens are supplied by SA Water, Botanic Park is watered via a pump out of the River Torrens. This is used except where algal bloom in the Torrens Lake poses a public health risk. There is a cost to drawing from the Torrens but it is not as significant as that incurred when the Park has to be supplied from SA Water.)

Wittunga

Apart from the water needed to keep the amenity lawns green, Wittunga is considered close to drought-proof.

The supply is from SA Water and the garden is drip-watered. The system now in place is efficient and has enabled water usage to be reduced by two-thirds over the past six years – from an annual consumption of 34,000 kilolitres down to 11,000 kilolitres.

The two supply meters are checked very regularly and Dennis May says that they would know up there if they had a dripping tap.

Mount Lofty

At Mt Lofty it's almost business as usual this year.

The Gardens rely directly and indirectly on an average annual rainfall of 1200 millimetres. This year, to the end of October, 800 mm had fallen against a usual precipitation by that time of one metre.

They are a lot better off than the plains but Acting Manager Robert Hatcher says they have this year begun irrigation a little earlier than normal. This year too they are altering practices to not irrigate after 12 midday during open hours and they are refraining from watering on Mondays – not for the Murray but for the valuable aquifer over which the Gardens sit.

The watering system at Mt Lofty is something of an enigmatic treasure. Involving interconnected bores, a central dam and a spring it defies some plumbing logic and is fully understood by very few people. But it works very well and is a story in itself – one that the next Gazette issue will feature.

November guest speaker

Professor Chris Daniels, guest speaker at the Friends' November 2006 meeting, with his new book Adelaide: Nature of a City.



Peter Cundall met some Friends

ABC TV's *Gardening Australia* host Peter Cundall attended a short-notice Friends gathering at the National Wine Centre on November 28, 2006.

He spoke briefly to the group as a whole and then chatted informally with individual attendees.

- *Garden Guide Barb Field had a chat with Peter Cundall.*



- *As did Ian Shomburgk, great grandson of the second Director of the Adelaide Botanic Gardens.*



- *Peter had an armful with the new twins of South Australian presenter Sophie Thompson.*



Our *Hicksbeachia* has flowered!

By Bill Dowling

The *Proteaceae* family is everybody's favourite. It includes many of Australia's best-known ornamental plants like our 77 *Banksia* species, the numerous cultivated varieties of *Grevillea* and the wonderful Wheel of Fire Tree.

It also has several lesser-known genera like South Australia's *Conospermum* and the enigmatically-named *Hicksbeachia*.



Hicksbeachia pinnatifolia at the top of Fern Gully in the Mount Lofty Botanic Garden. The plant shows healthy new growth above some older, damaged leaves.

Hicksbeachia pinnatifolia has flowered for the first time in the Mount Lofty Botanic Garden. This uncommon plant is endemic to small patches of the subtropical rainforests of northern NSW and southern Queensland.

Its range is limited and the Commonwealth Department of Environment and Heritage lists it as 'vulnerable'. It is rarely seen in South Australia. Even less common is the only other *Hicksbeachia* species, *H. pilosa*, from northern Queensland.

Hicksbeachia pinnatifolia may be uncommon, but its tasty nuts are popular and it has many common names. They include Monkey Nut, Red Bopple (or Boppel), Red Bopple Nut, Beef Nut, Red Apple Nut and Ivory Silky Oak.

"Bopple Nut" will ring a bell with those familiar with Queensland's delicious *Macadamia tetraphylla* and the two species have several similarities – they are both Proteaceous plants with edible nuts.



Old *Hicksbeachia* flowers.

What's more, their flowers are similarly arranged. Most *Proteaceae* family members have prominent styles (the female part of the flower), but the styles may be arranged in very diverse ways – compare a *Banksia* spike with the circular Wheel of Fire flower.

The family is, in fact, named after the Greek god Proteus, who was able to take on many different forms. *Hicksbeachia* and *Macadamia* have their

flowers in hanging spikes and there has been some botanical debate over whether they are sufficiently similar to allow them to be classified as members of the same genus.

If this happens, we may lose the unusual name which, like several plant names of the 19th century, honours a British Colonial Secretary. In this case it was the wonderfully-named Right Honourable Sir Michael Edward Hicks-Beach, who held the post from 1878 to 1880.

Hicksbeachia pinnatifolia has bright red, oval fruits which taste and can be used like Macadamia nuts. While an established tree yields lots of high quality nuts, the species is difficult to grow from seed as the seedlings suffer from various disorders and the seeds are only briefly viable. Commercial exploitation of the tree may only be possible by grafting to a suitable rootstock.

Now there is even more reason to visit the Mt Lofty Botanic Garden. You'll find *Hicksbeachia pinnatifolia* near the top of Fern Gully, just west of the toilet block. Its two spent flowers are still hanging from the trunk.

Friend's 2007-09 Action Plan moves forward

Since mid-year Friend's Committee members and interested general members have been taking part in a number of discussion and planning sessions aimed at developing the Friend's Action Plan 2007-09. These sessions have been facilitated by Leanne Muffett of Strategic Matters.

The Action Plan has now been formally accepted as amended by the Friend's committee and those other members who attended the planning sessions.

The Plan will be formally presented to the Board and Management early in this new calendar year and summarised in a future edition of the Gazette. In the meantime there is a copy of the document to be presented at the Friend's office (open now 9am to 5pm Wednesday to Friday) and members can also view the plan on the website.

The five core principles driving the action plan are:

- A strong identity for the Friends
- Excellence in internal operations
- Responsible financial management
- Smart partnerships
- Enjoyable social activities.

News from North Lodge

By Helena Jenkinson, Chair of the North Lodge Committee

North Lodge is now available to Friends and Gardens volunteers as a place to meet and relax every Tuesday and Wednesday from 10am to 3pm.

Come and enjoy the wonderful ambience of North Lodge. Read a book or browse through a magazine before or after working or walking in the Gardens. Meet with like-minded Friends for a chat and a cuppa.

We have had some interesting open days at North Lodge. An information day was held on September 9, with North Lodge looking warm and inviting – enhanced with beautiful flowers from all three gardens.

An exhibition and demonstration was held there on October 7 and 8 by talented people from Basketry SA. There were many spectacular articles including baskets of all shapes and sizes, corsets and cocktail hats – all made with dried plant materials. Basketry SA was so pleased with the weekend that they are planning a 10-day exhibition at North Lodge this year.

The Friends Botanical Art group held their first exhibition at North Lodge on Saturday, November 11, and their talent is certainly blooming. To complete 2006 a Christmas card workshop was held there on November 22.

The North Lodge Committee is planning some further exhibitions there during 2007. These will include the Embroidery Guild in April; 'Art with a Plant Theme' in June; wood turning possibly in July; and basketry in September. The Committee would welcome any suggestions for other activities.

The Craft Group continues to meet regularly on the third Thursday of each month and are continuing to maintain their high standards. They have attracted good custom when they have held their sale days with the Growing Group at the Adelaide and Mt Lofty Gardens. They also have goods for sale at all Friends meetings.

Rosemary Mawby is doing a splendid job of sorting, cataloguing and displaying the Friends' books and magazines. The room has certainly become a welcoming place to sit, relax and browse. Please come and use it! And remember that donations of botanical books are always welcome.

The sub-groups of the Friends are using different rooms in North Lodge for their meetings and the beautiful heritage building is continuing to be loved. A big thanks to the Board of Management of the Botanic Gardens of Adelaide for enabling the Friends to continue to use North Lodge for the betterment of the Gardens.

A welcome to new members

It is with considerable pleasure we welcome the following new members of The Friends of the Botanic Gardens of Adelaide:

Mr I Adams and Ms Porritt, Bridgewater; Mrs L A Austin, Stirling; Mrs A Baillie, Colonel Light Gardens; Mrs SLB Bates, Hazelwood Park; Mrs EC Baxter, Blackwood; Mr R Black, Newton; Mrs CB Boros, Glen Osmond; Mrs P Cooper, Clearview; Mrs JM Davidson, Walkerville; Mr PJ Doran, Brooklyn Park; Miss M Ellis, Netherby; Bishop and Mrs George, Gilberton; Mr and Mrs D Greet, Beulah Park; Mrs BA Grimwade, Burnside; Mr and Mrs R Hartigan, Montacute; Mr R Hayter, Magill; Ms AE Johnson, Aldgate; Ms C McKay, Glenelg North; Mrs MH McMeekin, Adelaide; Mrs J Oliver, Leabrook; Mr and Mrs T Reynolds, Port Willunga; Ms C Rola-Wojciechowski; Ms AG Roberts, Vale Park; Mr and Mrs S Robinson, West Lakes; Ms J Shields, Kensington Park; Dr and Mrs AL Sparnon, Hahndorf; Mrs and Miss J Treutlein, Klemzig; Ms R Watt, Marden; Ms CN Young, Evanston.

A LETTER FROM A FRIEND

Cheryl is a born teacher

On November 22, 2006 I was fortunate indeed to attend a session of Christmas Card making with a small group of Friends at North Lodge.

A very able instructor Cheryl Thwaites had prepared and very generously supplied materials for our use. Under her guidance we each created our own version of five different cards and it proved to be great fun as humour and enormous enthusiasm took over. After a good scrub of sticky fingers we achieved our goal.

Cheryl is a born teacher and gave us so much information and help. We sincerely hope that further workshops will take place.

Well done Cheryl. Thank you, you have inspired us all.

Helen Lumb
14A Essex Street
BRIGHTON SA 5048

Tours Committee

MORNING VIDEO AND GUIDED WALK

Wednesday, February 7; 9.30am at the Noel Lothian Hall

A beautiful video – ‘Australia’s Rose Gardens’ – filmed in five States and in more than 20 of the country’s most renowned and admired public and private rose gardens.

It will be followed by morning tea and a guided walk in the International Rose Garden

Cost is \$5.00. For bookings and enquiries, contact Mary Findlay: (08) 8363 3282.

VISIT TO ARTLAB AUSTRALIA

Wednesday, March 7 at 11am

A visit to Artlab Australia at 70 Kintore Avenue, Adelaide, followed by an optional light lunch at Balaena Café at the South Australian Museum. It will be a free guided tour.

For bookings and enquiries, contact Mary Findlay (08) 8363 3282.

MELBOURNE FLOWER SHOW TOUR

This lovely nine-day tour will be visiting gardens in Geelong, the Dandenong Ranges, the Mornington Peninsula, Bright, Beechworth and other country areas – as well as the Melbourne International Flower Show – one of the top five shows worldwide.

The tour departs on March 25 and the share-cost of the tour is \$2,395 with a single supplement of \$425

Book early as there is a major swimming event in Melbourne at that time and hotel accommodation is at a premium.

For more information and booking forms please ring Stephanie at the Friend’s Office on (08) 8222 9367. The office is attended from Wednesday to Friday from 9 am to 5 pm.

NORFOLK ISLAND TOUR

October 20 to 27, 2007

This tour is filling fast. The estimated cost is \$2,800 with a \$420 single supplement. For more information, please telephone Trish Byrne on (08) 8331 0267.

SUMMER 2007:

Plant of the season

SACRED LOTUS
Nelumbo nucifera

*By Bill Dowling –
truly a man of letters*



Photo: Carmel O'Reilly

On summer days the Lotus pond's
A perfect place to sit.
Behind, the Sheoaks dip their fronds
And little birdies flit.

The lovely flowers' subtle hue -
A pleasure to behold.
These blooms not only can, but do
Keep insects from the cold.

Inside the little beetles dance
A night club pace frenetic.
What brings about this circumstance?
The plant's thermogenetic!

It's found in many warmer climes
From Darwin to Colombo.
The species name – well, nothing rhymes,
But the genus is *Nelumbo*.

In summer, the Lotus Pond is one of the most visited sites in the Adelaide Botanic Garden. Deservedly so – the flowers provide a stunning display, backed by blue-green, water repellent leaves and followed by distinctive, drooping seed pods.

The Sacred Lotus, *Nelumbo nucifera*, is important in at least three ancient religions – Buddhism, Hinduism and Islam. It is said that the Vietnamese Emperor Tu Duc (1848-1883) had his breakfast tea leaves placed in Lotus

flowers overnight. In the morning they were brewed with the dew which had condensed on the same leaves. The stems and roots are edible and have medicinal uses. They appear in carved images on the walls of many old Indian Hindu temples.

This is also a plant of great interest to modern science. Research conducted here in Adelaide has revealed that its female parts (carpels) mature before the male parts (stamens). During the female phase of about 24 hours, the flower maintains an internal temperature of 30 to 33 degrees Celsius, regardless of the ambient temperature. This is better temperature regulation than many animals achieve, and only a few plants can do it. The warm flower attracts cold-blooded beetle pollinators as a 'night club' where they can keep warm and conserve energy during cold nights – nectar is also available. Other 'thermogenetic' plants are the Arum Lilies, some cycads, *Victoria amazonica*, the Skunk Cabbage and *Philodendron selloum*.

Lotus leaves are exceptionally water-repellent. Microscopic pin-head structures cause water to roll off the leaves, taking dirt with it. This property has now been reproduced and is used in the production of water-resistant, self-cleaning exterior paint called 'Lotusan'.

Lotus seeds are as interesting as the flowers are beautiful, being remarkably long-lived. There is one authenticated record of germination after 237 years.

The Lotus was long thought to be endemic to the River Nile in Egypt and a careful scrutiny of the big illuminated picture of a Lotus in the current *Botanical Riches* exhibition will show the pyramids in the background. The plant is actually from a large oriental belt from India, China and Japan, down to Australia's tropical north, and it is thought that it became naturalised in Egypt via the ancient Silk Route. It seems to have been around the area in ancient Greek times with Odysseus's men suffering a 'blissful forgetfulness' in Libya, the land of the Lotus eaters.

What do you know about pyrography?

Pyrography is the creation of beautiful designs burnt into wood.

If you are interested in learning pyrography join a tutor group under Jeff Whimpress at North Lodge on Tuesday, February 12. It will run from 10am to 2pm at a cost of \$20. Morning tea will be provided.

To book please phone Helena Jenkinson on (08) 8326 0768. Numbers are limited.

What's in bloom ...

Plants in flower and fruit in the Adelaide Botanic Garden, January 2007

In the month of January the Adelaide Botanic Garden, during one of its hotter and drier summers of late, will have many of the 'old reliable' in flower such as *Hibiscus*, *Agapanthus*, *Brugsmania*, *Canna*, *Grevillea*, *Salvia*, *Strelitzia* – and the ever dependable roses.

The Mediterranean Garden will be in full flower, displaying plants suitable for our climate. The display is a wonderful example of how in-line drippers can support an attractive garden in these waterwise days and with the current restrictions!

In the Whipstick Mallee there is some sporadic production of flower buds; somewhat unusual for this time of year. They have appeared on *Eucalyptus kingsmillii* ssp. *alatissima*, *E. gillii*, *E. calycogona* ssp. *calycogona*, and *E. odorata*.

In the Mallee also several *Eucalyptus* sp. and *Eremophila* sp. will be in flower. Of particular note are *Eucalyptus leptophylla*, *E. eremophila*, *Eremophila alternifolia*. *Capparis mitchellii*, *Brachychiton discolor* and *Ptilotus exaltatus* will also be showing off their flowers.

In the waterwise Sunken Garden *Scaevola* 'Mauve Clusters', *Vitex agnus-castus* and *Vitex negundo* var. *negundo* show what useful garden plants they are for this time of year.

The Economic Garden will display the impressive *Helianthus annuus*, *Solidago canadensis*, *Curcuma longa* and *Hedychium spicatum*. The *Brachychiton discolor* in the Classground should also still be in flower.

Syzygium paniculata and *Syzygium oleosum* will also be bearing their attractive fruit, while *Nelumbo nucifera* will still be in flower and the earlier blooms will be maturing into those spectacular seed heads.



... and from the Flinders Ranges

The beautiful Native Hibiscus, *Alyogyne hakeifolia*, from the Flinders Ranges is currently flowering in the Mallee section.

A PIECE OF GARDENS HISTORY:

The old bell

By Russell Smith

In January 1856, the Adelaide Botanic Gardens purchased a bell for two pounds ten shillings from Messrs. Franklin & Taylor. It would be nice to be able to prove that the old one now housed in its glass case in the entrance hall of the Goodman Building is that very bell for that would make it one of only a few surviving relics from the Garden's beginning, 150 years ago.

The 1856 bell was positioned by the North Terrace gate, well before the Garden was opened to the public. The gate itself had only just been installed, completing the construction of the first fence around the boundary of the Garden, a fence of wooden palings in some sections, posts and rails in others. The bell was solely for the use of tradesmen and other visitors, to announce their arrival and request to be let in. George Francis and his team of gardeners could have been working anywhere in the Garden and the unmanned gate was kept locked at all times when planting of many expensive trees and shrubs commenced.

It would seem probable that the bell remained by the main gate for a considerable time after the opening of the Garden in October 1857. One can imagine the gatekeeper, from his adjacent, quaint little sentry box, having the responsibility of ringing the bell to announce closing time. Perhaps when the gatekeepers were finally dispensed with the bell was moved to a more central part of the Garden, somewhere near where the kiosk was built in 1906. The sign on the glass case in the Goodman Building states that the bell was rung from that location.

An amusing incident concerning the bell occurred in December 1905. An irate visitor wrote a letter to the press complaining about "the clamorous bell" being rung at 5.30pm, much too early on a summer's afternoon. He wrote, "To those who were the victims of this annoying occurrence there appeared no sane reason why they should be caused to vacate the gardens ... If our officials were not blinded by the prejudices of officialdom, they would see that in a climate such as ours ... This gross-blindness ... etc. etc". The gentleman was not amused.

Director of the Garden, Dr. Holtz, was quick to reply. "Our bell is at present sounded at about 7 o'clock and it is generally dark when the gates are locked. The bell, which people have heard ringing at 5.30pm, is that of the Hospital ringing for the change of nurses."

The Simpson Family and the Adelaide Botanic Garden

By Bill Dowling

The Simpson family has been a staunch supporter of the Adelaide Botanic Garden over several generations.

AM Simpson was one of the early members of the then Board of Governors of the Garden for twenty years, serving from 1897 to 1917. In 1906 he donated the building we now know as the Simpson Kiosk. This greatly improved the refreshment facilities of the Garden. The building was opened to great fanfare in 1907 as part of the Garden's 50-year Jubilee celebrations.

The Centenary History of the Garden (1955) notes that, following the death of Mr Simpson, "the Garden lost a staunch friend". On October 19, 1919, the AM Simpson House was opened. It was donated by Mrs Simpson and her daughter in memory of their husband and father.

At that time, there was of course no Mount Lofty Botanic Garden and thus no Fern Gully or Rhododendron Gully. The new shade house allowed the people of Adelaide to see many cool temperate and shade-loving plants like ferns, azaleas, hostas, begonias and hydrangeas. It showed that these plants could be cultivated successfully on the Adelaide plains, given the right conditions. The original structure has withstood the rigors of time reasonably well and has recently had major structural work that will keep it with us for many more years.

Allen Simpson, son of AM, became a Mayor of Adelaide and an ex-officio member of the Gardens Board.

Mrs Shirley Simpson, daughter-in-law of Allen, was a founding member of the Friends and succeeded Colin Robjohns as Friends President. She was an enthusiastic gardener, a garden guide and the first leader of the Friends tours group. Shirley also donated several superb pieces of furniture which are now housed in the Goodman Building. They include a magnificent screen by the well-known Australian flower painter, Ellis Rowan.

Support from the Simpson family continues to the present day. The very first intake of garden guides included Mrs Audrey Abbie, another granddaughter of AM Simpson. Audrey was an active guide for many years. She maintains a keen interest in the Garden and provides generous support to the Friends. Her nephew, Charles Simpson, is the treasurer of the Gardens 150 Foundation Committee.

On a plant safari –

In September 2006 two Friends – Kate Hislop and Judy Morton – visited South Africa in time for what Kate describes as the best flower season there for 40 years. They have both kindly provided reports for the Gazette with the suggestion that they be run concurrently and the acceptance that they may collectively be too long for this issue. There was no argument: they begin here and will be completed in the next quarterly Gazette.

NAMAQUALAND

By Kate Hislop

In September Judy Morton and I visited South Africa in time for the best flower season in 40 years. Indulging a passion for succulents Judy and I began in a small town called Upington on the Orange River where this river forms the boundary between Namibia and Namaqualand. Amazingly, like Australia, it was flat, with dry, reddish earth growing sultanas under irrigation against a background of Eucalypts or Casuarinas.

During the week we headed west to Springbok then made our way south towards Capetown. We were well looked after by our guide who spoke Afrikaans, brought books on the flora, and pointed out the birds such as the beautiful malachite sun-bird, various weaver birds, sacred ibis and a black eagle. The sociable weaver birds build enormous nests on the telegraph poles. They are like big woven, hanging bags.

Namaqualand has been described as “a desert with unparalleled plant wealth”. Of significance is the rainfall pattern, normally fine soaking rain mainly in winter. The difference between Namaqualand and other deserts is that the rain is almost always reliable. Some areas have lower summer temperatures with fog which supplies additional moisture and softens the arid climate.

Succulent Karoo is found in both Namaqualand and the Cape. Namaqualand is a desert shrubland characterized by dwarf shrubs which have succulent leaves. Around 1,700 species of leaf succulents grow here, of which about 700 are dwarf forms. These include the unique stone plants and their allies. Stem succulents, more typical of deserts in other parts of the world, are less prevalent, and include *euphorbias*, *tylecodons*, *pelargoniums* and *stapeliads*. Two interesting ones were *Sarcocaulon* (perhaps *S patersonii*) and *Geraniaceae* (Bushmans Candle) which has a white flower and white spines on its stems. The leaves of this plant persist as white thorns while the waxy texture of the stem bark is flammable and can be used as kindling to light fires.

Namaqualand is famous for its daisies, there in abundance in the Skilpad

Flower Reserve, that open up as the sun comes out. Brilliant patches of orange and blue delighted the eye, stretching away into the far distance. We forded small creeks still running with water. By the creeks we saw *Acacia karoo* (Karoo Thorn), always nearly leafless and small in size, but with the white thorns that catch the light.

Nieuwoldville is known world wide as the bulb capital. Literally thousands of species of bulbs, corms and tubers (geophytes) can be found in one square meter of ground. One obvious benefit for bulbs is that the storage of supplies is underground which protects it from bushfires. Namaqualand has the highest concentration of flat-leaved bulbs in the world. It is thought the leaves are positioned in this way to make maximum use of the midday sun e.g. *Lachenalia* (possibly *pallida*). We also saw *Lachenalia splendida*.

Bulbs make good eating for indigenous animals like mole rats, the cute Namaqua tortoise and lizards. To counteract this many bulbs like *Ornithogalum* contain toxic substances. But like our own koalas and birds with Eucalypts, these animals are equipped to handle the toxins.

To be continued

NOW FLORA MAKES THE 'BIG-SIX'

By Judy Morton

People have visited Africa to see the 'big five' of the animal world for many years. Growing numbers are now visiting to see the continent's unique plant life.

In particular the western and northern Cape areas are quite spectacular, supporting plant life of astounding diversity, beauty and strangeness. The area is known as 'The Cape Floristic Region' (CFR) and has been included in the six areas of the world with unique vegetation. But the Cape is particularly special as the area is only 0.04% of the surface of the earth whereas, for instance, the entire Northern hemisphere is one of the other areas. The CFR is home to 9,000 flowering plants, 69% of which are endemic!

There are five biomes recognised in the region. 'Fynbos' (Fine Bush) occupies 80% of the CFR and occurs on poor sandstone soils in mountains and lowland. It is dominated by three main families – *Proteaceae*, *Ericaceae* and *Restionaceae* and many bulbous plants. Another biome is called 'Succulent Karoo' (Succulent Dry), a very special type of desert and here it is the *Asteraceae* (daisies), *Mesembrythemaceae* (succulents) and *Iridaceae* (bulbs) which are the dominant families. 'Fynbos' occurs mostly in the south-west of the Cape while 'Succulent Karoo' is in the region to the north which includes Namaqualand.

Winter rainfall is a key factor in determining both vegetation types but it is the combination of poor soils, periodic fires and persistent winds (Cape

Town is one of the windiest cities in the world) which have played a big part in shaping the 'Fynbos'. Namaqualand has better soils but with annual rainfall of less than 200 mm it qualifies as a desert. Fortunately the moisture is improved by the almost daily rolling in of fog as a result of the Benguella Current which runs all the way up the west coast of Africa. Both areas have an overwhelming variety of plant life which changes in composition over relatively short distances.

In the SW Cape the land consists of folded mountains dropping away to the coast which gives rise to geographical isolation of plant communities. In Namaqualand particularly succulent plants have been able to adapt to subtle mineral variations in the soil. Some of the extraordinary features of the dominant plant families are summarised hereunder, hopefully giving an idea of why more tourists are visiting the Cape and why there must be every effort to preserve the regions.

Proteaceae

The present distribution of this family worldwide reflects the breakup of Gondwana millions of year ago. Pollen fossils indicate that the earliest forms arose when Africa was still attached to South America. Two subgroups of the family, the *Proteoideae* and the *Grevillioideae* evolved before Africa split and moved north. Subsequently both types expanded in Australia where the greatest diversity now occurs.

It is interesting that the Cape and the south-west of Western Australia are identified as heaths and have many representatives of the *Proteaceae* family. But our Banksias, Grevilleas and Hakeas are part of the *Grevillioideae* group whereas the 14 genera of South African *Proteaceae* are from the *Proteiodaeae* group (Protea, Leucodendron, Leucospermum and the amazing Mimetes are four examples).

Sixty nine of the 82 species of the Protea genus grow in the Fynbos. They may be the dominant vegetation in some areas but there are prostrate forms which are pollinated by mice attracted by a yeasty odour. Many *Proteaceae* are pollinated by the Cape Sugar bird which relies entirely on them for food and nesting. Insects, especially scarab and monkey beetles, are important pollinators while 10 species of Leucadendron are wind pollinated.

They have unique floral structures, generally bundles of florets surrounded by colourful bracts. Many seeds have elaiosomes which are oily protuberances attractive to ants. The seed is carried underground to await suitable conditions for germination which may only be after fire. The famous Silver Tree (*Leucadendron argenteum*) growing at the foothills of Table Mountain has little nuts with a parachute attached.

To be continued

Down the Yorke Peninsula

By Jennifer Ruttlely

There was some excited anticipation when Anne Hastings of the Tours Group and 19 Friends headed off on their Yorke Peninsula trip. And we were not disappointed. We drove through many lovely townships with interesting old buildings – some grand and others simple but practical. We saw golden wheat, barley and hay paddocks against glorious backgrounds of blue ocean and sky.

The museum at Ardrossan, in a former harvester factory, opened especially for us with an excellent visual display of the town's past 'wharf' life.

The 39 children of the Port Vincent School gave a very enthusiastic account of their studies into the marine life of Gulf St Vincent. Their aquatic room was full of information, their projects and large fish tanks with marine life from the Gulf. Those children were so happy at school.

Edithburgh, with its jetty, impressive 55-tower wind farm and great restaurants, was our base. All the components for the wind farm arrived on semi-trailers and the farm will generate sufficient electricity for 52,000 households.

At Wool Bay we saw an alpaca farm and at Minlaton, a privately-run military museum. At Koolywurtie we visited the home, interesting garden and seed collection/distribution set up of Yorke Seeds. Afternoon tea was served there in a barn using white linen cloths, napkins, bone china, candelabras and straight-from-the-oven scones.

The gardens at Foul Bay included an amazing project using their own desalinated water for hydroponic vegetable growing. The owners were also planting trees to regenerate their 195 acres. Further along, and overlooking the Gulf, a garden specialised in hoyas and near Warooka the garden of a sheep grazing property was laid out in 'rooms' – cottage, shade, tree/bush etc.

We spent a day at the Innes National Park taking in the great ocean views, lots of history, some wildlife and a few wildflowers. We toured the old buildings and machinery of the former gypsum works at Inneson.

At Maitland we had an informative talk about olive growing and oil production and saw the Cedar Crest modern stained glass windows in the Anglican Church there. From there we took an interesting conducted tour of the former copper mining workings at Moonta, including an internal inspection of a miner's cottage and its garden.

Gardens staff involved in River Torrens revegetation

From Botanic Park Curator, Tristan Andrews

About seven months ago Gardens' staff were involved in planting around 3,000 native trees, shrubs and groundcovers as part of a revegetation program beginning behind the Zoo Wall.

While the area along the River Torrens is not a garden per se (rather a representation of an open mallee woodland), the revegetation is an amenity planting that will beautify and enhance the biodiversity along the River Torrens Linear Park and Zoo Wall environs.

The plantings included for instance *Hardenbergia violaceae* and *Acacia acinaceae* that will make a stunning contrast of purple and yellow in mid to late winter.

In this project the Botanic Gardens has been working in partnerships with the Adelaide City Council, the Adelaide Zoo and One Million Trees. We envisage that both sides of the river from the Hackney Bridge to Frome Road will be planted with the flora that once existed before European settlement.

Currently, all stock has been sourced from remnant vegetation from the West Terrace Cemetery, the Burnside Council and from our Herbarium. Only a small number of trees such as River Red Gums and Blue Gums have been included, with the majority of the plantings being shrubs, grasses, saltbushes and groundcovers – vegetation that would once have occurred there.

Within the revegetation area I have already noticed a number of native skipper butterflies and dragonflies particularly on the Native Hollyhock (*Lavatera plebeia*). Some Eucalyptus and Acacias are nearing a metre high, even in this rain-forsaken season.

While lack of rain has seen us hand water the site four times (about once a month), the biggest threats to the health of some of the species have been possums and wood geese.

A number of the in situ plants will become sources of seed and cuttings for continued plantings, making this a wholly-sustainable undertaking.



The Minister for Environment and Conservation, the Hon. Gail Gago MLC at the Garden Party with Gardens Board Chairman Ian Little and Stephen Forbes, Director of the Botanic Gardens of Adelaide and the State Herbarium.

THE GARDEN PARTY:

'Wander through Wonderland'

The Adelaide Botanic Garden held its second annual Garden Party 'Wander through Wonderland' on Thursday, October 26.

An 'Alice In Wonderland' theme contributed to its huge success. For the 220-plus guests who attended it was a fabulous night of entertainment, food and drinks.



Department for Environment and Heritage Chief Executive Allan Holmes with Kym Winter-Dewhirst who was appointed to the Gardens Board in December.



Rick Abbott (left), Charlie Downer and Rob Hunt enjoyed the Garden Party.