



CONFIRMED MINUTES

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Tuesday 9 May 2017 at 5.30pm

held in the Margaret Whitlam Pavilion, National Arboretum Canberra

1. **Welcome**

The Chair, Trish Keller OAM, welcomed all to the meeting and made the Acknowledgement of Country.

2. **Attendance and Apologies**

Attendance – Mary Arnold, Richard Bear, Margaret Bourke, Lauren Brown, Jenny Cantlon, Del Da Costa, Rob Ey, Jocelyn Fitzhardinge, Jill Howard, Michael Hodgkin, Anna Howe, Margaret Johnson, Valentyna Jouravlev, Janet Kay, Anna Kieltyka, Trish Keller OAM, Naomi Landau, Sandra Linsley, Colette Mackay, Joanne Maples, Cherie McLean-Whan, Ange McNeilly, Linda Muldoon, Doug Nancarrow, Dennis Nicholls, Christine Payne, Jocelyn Plovits, Alma Quick, Marelle Rawson, Ian Sayers, Jane Scammell, Daniela Stehlik, Carolyn Thomas, Vicki Thompson, Mike Woolley, Vicki Woolley, Martin Wright, Sue Wright. [38]

Apologies – Josephine Bothroyd, Max Bourke AM, Cris Brack, Sue Brown, Dorothy Cameron, Meryl and Rick Causebrook, Elizabeth Grant AM, Bronwyn Halbisch, Meredith Hinchliffe, Roger Hnatiuk, Gini Hole, Yvonne Kilgour, Anne Meade, Shelley O'Neill, Susan Boden Parsons, Lainie and David Shorthouse, Jennie Widdowson, Shirley Wilton. [20]

3. **Acceptance of Minutes of 2016 AGM and Matters Arising**

Rob Ey moved and Del Da Costa seconded that the minutes of the 10 May 2016 Annual General Meeting were accepted without amendment. Carried.

There were no matters arising.

4. **Treasurer's Report**

The Treasurer, Richard Bear, had circulated the 2016 audited financial statements, which had been accepted by Council. At 31 December 2016, there was income of \$20,151; incurred operating expenses of \$13,370; resulting in an operating surplus of over \$15,950. Membership fees for the year totalled \$15,477 which, combined with the sale of The Arboretum Books and calendars of \$9,168, are the primary sources of funds.

The Friends' Trust Account received donations totalling \$54,570. During the course of the year, \$34,000 was passed onto the Arboretum being for the purchase and installation of sponsored seats.

The Treasurer thanked the auditor for completing the audit pro bono. Council had gifted him a free parking pass. Our sincere thanks go to Christopher Harding.

Jocelyn Plovits moved and Kathryn Cole seconded that the Friends audited financial statements for 2015 be accepted. Carried.

Richard Bear moved and Carolyn Thomas seconded that the Treasurer's Report be accepted and that Christopher Harding be appointed auditor for 2017. Carried.

5. Chair's Report

Trish Keller, as Chair of the Friends at the 2017 Annual General Meeting, offered her second Report. The full report appears at an appendix to these minutes.

Trish spoke of some of her highlights during the year:

- Lauren Brown, Community Engagement Officer (Volunteer Coordinator) was welcomed and thanked by acclamation.
- A wreath had been sent to Adam Burgess's family.
- Report from Friends' Forest coordinator, Andrew Carter.
- WarmTrees17 will be launched at 11.30am on 7 July at the Village Centre. Yoshino Cherry Trees are the focus for this year.
- The former COLA has been converted to the Terrace Room and is now a most useful space
- The Friends Survey has led to Friends Open Gate Days.
- The Friends Garden energy is being channelled to the Sky Garden. After significant consultation, Friends have promised up to \$20,000 for the concept plan.
- Tree Week 2016 saw a conference/series of mini-lectures which were fascinating.
- Volunteer of the Year Awards at the AIS. Friends provided 16,000 hours of volunteer service. The Tuesday and Thursday Working Bee teams received an award which reads "2017 Voluntary Awards – Recognition Award – Working Bee Teams, National Arboretum Canberra – in recognition of outstanding voluntary service in the Canberra region."
- Harvesting Group and Discovery Garden volunteers have worked fruitfully during the year.
- David Shorthouse received an environmental award for STEP work over many years.
- Ongoing Learning Sessions – thanks to Sandy Linsley and all the lecturers.
- 2017 Arboretum Calendar – thanks to Linda Muldoon.
- Themed walks
- Student photo competition awards in tandem with the Jake Keller Scholarship
- Huge thanks to so many contributors.

6. Proposed Change to Friends Constitution

Council member Rob Ey spoke briefly to the proposal to change clause 30. *Membership of the Council*. He explained that Council wished to make it clear that it was the Friends who had authority over membership of the council. It was thought better to make it clear that a NAC staff representative was a liaison/communication role, rather than involvement in leading the Friends.

The Current relevant clause

30. Membership of the Council

(a) The Council consists of:

- (i) the Executive Committee of the Association; and
- (ii) up to 5 ordinary Council members; and
- (iii) A representative of each specialist sub-committee of the Association (not already a Council member), as agreed by resolution of Council; and
- (iv) The Head of the Arboretum, or person performing such duties (ex officio); and
- (v) A Representative of the Arboretum staff (ex officio).

The proposed change

Remove sections 30 (iv) and 30 (v)

Insert:

30. (iv) *The council may invite, at its discretion, a member of the Arboretum staff to attend council meetings for the purpose of contributing to the processes of council with a particular focus on the alignment of NAC business and operational matters with the activities of the Friends of the NAC. The NAC invited staff member will not be a member of council and thereby not have any council responsibilities and will not vote, but must abide by council protocols. The council may revoke this invitation by a majority vote of the council.*

Richard Bear moved and Mike Hodgkin seconded a motion that the proposed change be made to the Friends' Constitution. The motion was carried unanimously.

7. Election of Office Bearers

Jocelyn Plovits acted as Returning Officer. She declared the positions vacant.

Position	Status	Nomination to date
Chair	Vacant	Trish Keller OAM
Deputy Chair	Vacant	Mike Woolley
Treasurer	Vacant	Richard Bear
Secretary	Vacant	Del Da Costa
Publications Editor	Vacant	Linda Muldoon
Donations and Sponsorships Manager	Vacant	Colette Mackay
Social Media Manager	Vacant	Cherie McLean
STEP Member	Vacant	Lainie Shorthouse
National Bonsai and Penjing Collection of Aust. Member	Vacant	Mike Woolley
Member (up to 5 Members)	Rob Ey	Anna Howe

All nominations for the positions were unanimously elected. Jocelyn noted that Council can co-opt other Members.

8. Award Presentations

Trish presented the Sterling Service awards to Jenny Cantlon, Lorraine Nicholls, Helen Hemphill, Ange McNeilly and Dennis Warne.

The Volunteer of the Year Award was given to Sandy Linsley for her highly-successful development and coordination of Continuing Learning Sessions for Guides, and New Guide training.

Bob Basham had been awarded the Bonsai Award.

There was no life membership award in 2017.

9. Other Business

John Mackay AM, patron of the Friends, provided an update on the Sky Garden. A concept plan is underway but the full cost is likely to be approximately \$450,000 including infrastructure. A consultation group from the Friends will comprise 5-6 people with relevant skills.

John also reported that construction of the Gift of Life Garden (one of the Gallery of Gardens) is underway with \$90,000 of the required \$180,000 raised so far. And the Australian Native Garden is raised \$50,000 which is half that needed.

The meeting closed at 6.20pm.



CHAIR'S REPORT TO 2017 AGM

The past year has had its highs and lows ... mostly highs.

However this past week with the death of Curator Adam Burgess has been the lowest.

So on behalf of all the Friends I offer condolences to Adams family. I have sent a wreath on behalf of all Friends for the funeral service on Thursday.

There is very moving tribute to Adam in the newsletter coming out very soon and I thank our Editor Linda Muldoon for her moving words and selection of photos.

The highs have included, at long last and after much lobbying, the appointment of our Community Engagement Officer, Lauren Brown. Her appointment is now permanent so we welcomed her with open arms and she is doing a great job supporting the Friends in the variety of activities they undertake. One of the key roles was to take over the rostering of the Guides which is working out splendidly. So thanks Lauren.

The new Arboretum Foundation was formed with John Mackay AM appointed Inaugural Chair by the Chief Minister. I was appointed as one of the 10 Directors of the Foundation. Gweneth Leigh our guest speaker tonight is also one of the Directors, just as a matter of interest. Members' bios are available in our Newsletter 33.

Working Bees have been held in the Friends Forest over the past year with Andrew Carter as Coordinator.

Warm Trees 2017

Jocelyn Plovits is Convenor of this activity and the connection this year is with the Embassy of Japan. Many meetings have been held with embassy officials. The forest featured for this year's Warm Trees is the Yoshino Cherries. The launch will take place on 4 July. You are all welcome to attend. A very heartfelt thank-you to all the knitters and supporters of this community program.

Last year's Warm Trees featured the Sugar Maples and Jocelyn developed a connection with the High Commission of Canada. The largest maple leaf in the world was feature of the event.

An off-shoot of this relationship came about when Fay Maddison, wife of the Canadian High Commissioner and author and creator of Natasha's Wood held an event in the Terrace Room kindly organised by Jocelyn. It was International Firefighters Day and as first responders are the focus of Ms Maddison's stories she invited Lady Cosgrove to read one of her stories and children of first responders here in the ACT to draw pictures some of which will be included in her Aussie version of the story. Thanks Jocelyn and NAC staff.

COLA to Terrace Room

In July, thanks to Jocelyn Plovits and her family's very generous sponsorship, this outdoor area was converted to the Terrace Room, now with fully automated doors, a small kitchen and air con/heater. It is now a most useful space and an incredible asset to the Arboretum with a myriad of uses including a meeting place for the Friends various activities, kite making and others school holiday programs, Council meetings, kids birthday programs, etc.

Friends Survey responses indicated that the Open Gate Days with guided walks in the southern Section of the Arboretum were the most popular of the Friends proposed activities. 23 April saw 500 cars come through.

Friends Garden

Much has been discussed about this idea of a Friends Garden in the space immediately under the Village Centre window. John Mackay AM has already told you about this space which is to become the SKY Garden. Friends have contributed \$20,000 to match the contribution from the Foundation to get the concept plan under way.

Tree Week 2016

An exhibition in the VC was opened by Caroline Lambert, Climate and Environment Counsellor in the Delegation of the European Union.

Other short but fascinating talks were given by Jennie Widdowson on the Geological History of deciduous trees; Andrew Carter's talk was *Why leaves fall in Autumn*; Adam Burgess told us which trees in the Arboretum have the best colours and why; a small picture - Bonsai in Autumn - was presented by Curator Leigh Taafe; a Big Picture: *What remote sensing tells us about seasonal change at the Arboretum* by Assoc Prof Cris Brack, ANU and *What makes for a brilliant Autumn in Canberra's street trees* by Carma Sweet.

2016 ACT Volunteers of the Year were announced at the AIS.

The Friends of the NAC received a Recognition Award for their outstanding voluntary service to the Canberra Region.

In 2016 the Friends gave 160,00 hours of voluntary service. An example is the 9 tonnes of fertiliser being distributed to 71 forests over 4 months by the Tues/Thurs Working Bees. What a great effort!

This year the Friends Tuesday and Thursday Working eyes were nominated for an award. Last night, right here at the NAC Village Centre!

There is a handout sheet with a long list of Volunteer Opportunities at the Arboretum. If you can think of any others please let Lauren know to add to the list.

The Discovery Garden

A group of Friends volunteers have committed to and tended this space over the year nurturing with weeding, watering, pruning, and harvesting under the watchful and ever vigilant eye of coordinator Ange McNeilly.

Thanks to Bronwyn Halbisch, the Coordinator of the Harvest group, who keeps a keen eye on the Fig forests with the maintenance and the harvesting of same on their minds. The end game of course is to have a Market Day with all the produce turned in to the most delicious array of goods – some fresh, but mostly preserved goods. We await the next Market Day on May 21 here at the NAC.

In Newsletter 33, September there was an article about STEP

The STEP Group won, in the Keep Australia Beautiful Awards, the award for Environmental Education as well as being Highly Commended in the Environmental Sustainable section. David Shorthouse won the separate individual ACTion Award for his work at STEP and also for his many years of work at Mulligans Flat.

So Congratulations again to the devoted STEP team!

On- going Learning

These sessions have been a very popular addition to Friends activities. A very big thank you to organiser Sandra Linsley.

Sessions have been provided by Dr Suzette Searle, Jennie Widdowson on Wattles, and Mark Richardson, a Botanical Consultant,

The 2016 **Arboretum Calendar** was sold out and the 2017 one equally popular. These are a bargain at @\$10. Thanks to Linda Muldoon for all her glorious photos and the production of this Friends' best-seller after the book, of course. Photos by Jack Mohr, first prize winner in the High School/College student section in the 2015/2016 Celebrating Summer at the NAC photo competition. were included.

Our Guides complemented Floriade with a series of **Themed Walks** including STEP in Spring, Spring in STEP, a Wollemi Wander, and Favourite Forest Forays.

Other walks include Wattle Walks, and medicinal and herbal uses of Arboretum tree species.

Our thanks to the Guides who research and create these themed walks with notes for other guides to share.

All the other walks have Guides braving all weathers to keep our visitors entertained.

The **2016 Student Photographic Competition**, *Capturing Springtime at the Arboretum*, was a great success and a great amount of work for Linda in the coordination of the whole event.

Special thanks again to the judges - Graham Tidy, former photographer from the Canberra Times, David Flannery, an architect and photographer, and our own Linda Muldoon.

Friends Newsletter 34 has all the winning entries and other photos of the presentation of awards evening.

That same evening the inaugural **Jake Keller Scholarship** was presented to 4th year CIT student Ryan Mallard by Jake's oldest friend here in the ACT, David Francis.

Incidentally, Ryan is now on the Horticulture Team at the Arboretum and in seventh heaven.

Guides Training for 2017 began in February 2017

Recently, after weeks of comprehensive training inside and out in the Arboretum, 35 new Guides were presented with their certificates. A huge vote of thanks must be apportioned to the Training Team and mentors, all overseen by the two superbly-organised coordinators Sandra Linsley and Lauren Brown. A great team effort!

The **Gallery of Gardens'** first four gardens were opened on Sunday 2 April by the Chief Minister and Minister for the Arboretum, Andrew Barr MLA. The next gardens are under construction and will be opened later in the year. In our latest Newsletter there is a very interesting article about these gardens. Thanks to the Friends volunteers who assisted visitors and guests on the day.

VISITING THE RELATIVES took on a different meaning recently when a photographic exhibition in the Village Centre was presented. 13 Friends and kindred spirits had travelled to South American national parks searching for the native habitats of the species that are living in our Arboretum forests. Thanks to Linda Muldoon for her wonderful photos again and all those who presented this lively, colourful and very interesting exhibition.

Once again there is more information on this in our latest Newsletter.

Seats

Colette Mackay is the Friends Donations and Sponsorship Coordinator. The new Gallery of Gardens will allow for many sponsored seats to be installed. These seats will have magnificent views of Lake Burley Griffin ... don't miss this opportunity to sponsor a seat ... talk to Colette. There is considerable information on our website.

Bonsai Week recently held was a huge success. A great variety of activities were undertaken during the week culminating in the Gala Cocktail evening where invited British Bonsai guru, Tony Tickle transformed a stock tree into bonsai masterpiece. Congratulations to Leigh Taafe and his team of staff and volunteers.

The **Strategic Plan** is an ongoing exercise. Council commits time prior to every Council meeting to this topic alone. Much of the original Strategic Plan has been achieved and we spend time looking forward to implementing the next steps.

One of the aspects that had been waiting was a Citizen Science page to go up on the website. With the expertise and knowledge of both Roger Hnatiuk and Cherie Maclean this is almost achieved.

Talks by the Chair

I am regularly invited to speak to various groups about the Arboretum and what the Friends do I refer you to the handout!

Talks have included a welcome last week to the Arboriculture Conference delegates, a talk to the Highland Garden Society at Bowral (109 attendees!) and I'm on notice for a talk go to the Brindabella Walking Club this Friday night and the Weston Creek View Club in August

Singapore Trip

Earlier in the year and on his sick bed, Max Bourke AM, came up with a fund-raising idea . Since Max is very familiar with Singapore and has travelled there to visit family over the past 40 years, Max has offered to lead a Friends Tour there in March 2018.

The tour operators are preparing a brochure with a most interesting list of venues that Max is very familiar with. Included are the Singapore Botanic Gardens, the National Orchid Garden, Fort Canning Heritage Tree Walk, the Mangrove Arboretum, the MacRichie Reservoir and Yishun Park. All details will be on our website in due course.

I want to thank Max for creating this fund-raising opportunity for the arboretum. Max is taking no payment for doing this, so if you are interested have a look at the website though it's not up yet and/or talk to Max.

Membership numbers are at a steady 720. They were a topic of our pre-Council meeting Strategic Plan the last time.

What is it we can offer to entice the community to become Friends of the National Arboretum? We would welcome any suggestions you may have.

Seasonal Talks

These have proved to be a very popular activity. Matthew Higgins addressed a full house in the Terrace Room a couple of months ago. The next will be a midday talk from Jackie Warburton who is President of the Cactus and Succulent Society ACT. It will be held in the Terrace Room in close proximity to the Cactus Garden. Jackie has written a most interesting article for the latest Newsletter.

Thank You

A long list ... to all of you, our Friends and volunteers, in whatever role you undertake at the Arboretum. Your contribution is much appreciated and enhances our mission statement in the Strategic Plan.

To Liz Clarke, Head of Events, in the CMTEDD. Your support at meetings and events is much appreciated

To Scott Saddler Executive Manager and his Admin team for all the support they provide to the Friends. We have developed a very amicable relationship.

To my fellow Council members your support through the year has been invaluable.

Thank you again!

Trish Keller OAM
Chair

Friends of the National Arboretum Canberra Inc.