



CONFIRMED MINUTES

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

**Tuesday 14 May 2019 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, Margie Bourke, Max Bourke, Lauren Brown, Ainslie Caller, Jenny Cantlon, Bob Chapman, Cilla Chapman, Del Da Costa, Sandra Doolan, Alan Doolan, Chris Duffy, Helen Hemphill, Cathy Ikin, Chris Ikin, Trish Keller OAM, Naomi Landau, Sandra Linsley, Bob Litte, Leigh Mitchell, Jan Morgan, Linda Muldoon, Owen O’Neill, Jocelyn Plovits, Lyn Rees, Carolyn Thomas, Shirley Wilton, Sue Wright. [28]

Apologies – Jeanette Hahn, John Hemphill, Colette Mackay, Ange McNeilly, Ian Sayers OAM, Lainie Shorthouse, David Shorthouse, Hans Van Haalen, Cherie Whan, Mike Woolley, Vicki Woolley, Martin Wright.

3. Acceptance of Minutes of 2018 AGM and Matters Arising

Margie Bourke moved and Helen Hemphill seconded that the minutes of the 8 May 2018 Annual General Meeting were accepted without amendment. Carried.

There were no matters arising.

4. Treasurer’s Report

The Treasurer, Lyn Rees, had circulated the 2018 audited financial statements, which incorporated the National Arboretum Canberra Public Trust Fund.

At 31 December 2018, there was \$182,269 cash at bank. This comprised \$95,905 in the Trust account and \$86,364 in the general account.

Friends’ total income was \$38,225 and a further \$43,530 was Trust Account income.

Friends total expenditure for the 2018 year was \$98,586 comprising \$46,246 from Friends’ operating expenditure, and \$52,340 related to Trust fund expenditure. Included in this expenditure is \$60,000 donated by Friends to the Arboretum for the Friends Dairy Farmers Hill Garden. This amount was split evenly from the Friends’ general fund and Trust fund.

During 2018, the Friends made an overall loss of \$16,831 attributable to Friends’ general

activities and activity in the Friends Trust. As noted above, we gifted a total of \$60,000 to the Friends' garden which is in keeping with the Friends' Mission to provide the Arboretum with funds to enhance and develop the Arboretum and to help the public to engage with the establishment and growth of the Arboretum. Overall, the Friends continue to maintain a healthy financial position with a total equity of \$178,843.

The Treasurer foreshadowed that Friends had committed \$50,000 to the Zigzag Garden. Fund-raising for this Garden was underway during 2019.

The Treasurer thanked the auditor, Christopher Harding, for completing the audit pro bono. Council had gifted him a free parking pass. Thanks were passed by acclamation.

Max Bourke moved and Carolyn Thomas seconded that the 2018 Financial Statements for the Friends of the National Arboretum Canberra Inc and incorporating the National Arboretum Canberra Public Trust Fund be accepted; and that Christopher Harding be appointed auditor for 2019. Carried.

5. Chair's Report

Trish Keller OAM, as Chair of the Friends at the 2019 Annual General Meeting, offered her fourth Report. The full report appears at an appendix to these minutes.

6. Election of Office Bearers

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

Position	Status	Nomination to date
Chair		Trish Keller OAM
Deputy Chair		Mike Woolley
Treasurer	Lynley Rees	
Secretary		Del Da Costa
Publications Editor	Mary Arnold	
Donations and Sponsorships Manager		Trish Keller OAM
Social Media Manager		Cherie McLean
STEP Member		Chris & Cathy Ikin
National Bonsai and Penjing Collection of Aust. Member		Mike Woolley
Ordinary Member (up to 5 Members)	Helen Hemphill Sandra Linsley Jan Morgan Hans van Haalen	

Jocelyn Plovits moved and Carolyn Thomas seconded the nominations. All these nominations were unanimously elected. Jocelyn noted that Council can co-opt other Members.

7. Award Presentations

The **Volunteer of the Year Award** was given to Ian Sayers OAM for completing over 200 shifts as a guide since 2013, leading specialist guiding tours for VIPs and veterans, and developing walks and tours.

Trish presented five **Sterling Service awards** to: Ange McNeilly, John Hemphill, Carolyn Thomas, Shirley Wilton and Vicki Woolley.

There were no **Life Memberships** awarded in 2019.

Trish sincerely thanked Lainie Shorthouse stepping down from **Council**, noting she has made a significant contribution to the Friends and the Arboretum.

8. Other Business

There was no other business.

The meeting closed at 6.15pm.

Trish then introduced the Guest Speakers for the evening from the Australasian Carnivorous Plant Society: Bob Little and Owen O'Neill.

The Australasian Carnivorous Plant Society Inc is a not-for-profit society that promotes the cultivation, conservation and education of carnivorous plants. The Society now has regular meetings in Sydney, Brisbane and Canberra where they welcome new and experienced collectors.

They produce a bi-yearly journal *Carniflora Australis*, and a monthly newsletter *Carniflora News*. And they have an active membership and participate in a number of horticulturally-based events and shows. Canberra Branch members display plants, share information and sell plants at the Old Bus Depot Markets during the spring and summer.



Chair's Report AGM 2019

It is, with great pleasure, I offer you my Report as Chair of the Friends of the National Arboretum for 2018.

Thank you for your attendance this evening. I'd particularly like to acknowledge the Director of the National Arboretum Canberra, Scott Saddler, Christine Callen, Events and Community Engagement Manager, and Lauren Brown, Community Engagement Officer.

MEMBERSHIP - You will be pleased to hear that membership numbers this year are trending up. Right now membership numbers are 700. This time last year they were 683.

FRIENDS' ACTIVITIES - there is always such a great deal to report to you so in no particular order I'll begin with the **MOU and the Strategic Plan**.

At the beginning of the year Council met with John Hemphill, who had offered his years of experience as our Facilitator to start the process. And at no cost for which we are very grateful indeed. John is Director of the company Voyager Strategies Pty Ltd and he has been engaged in this facilitating work for many years. I thank John again for the countless hours he has worked with us and guided us along the path to fulfilling our undertaking to you last year that we would have a newly revitalised Strategic Plan for you this year.

The MOU came to light to be revamped at the same time so we dealt with both. It was obviously the right time to revisit and revise our processes and governance and move with the times. The NAC had a new Strategic Plan and so should ours be up-to-date, aligning our priorities and methods to support and be congruent with theirs.

With the NAC Strategic Plan close at hand and bearing in mind their key priorities where we, the Friends, were identified as key stakeholders, we got started.

Our key points were that the Friends wanted to strengthen our partnership with the NAC, support the NAC position itself as a world-class destination through a high-quality visitor experience, and to continue to assist the growth of the NAC, building this strong partnership wherever and whenever we could.

The Friends' pool of expertise is second to none and underpinned by immense goodwill.

The brainstorming that evolved from those first two Council meetings kept coming back to two phrases: **visitor experience** (has favourable view of the Arboretum, looks forward to coming here, enjoys the experience and learns from it and communicates joyfully about the experience afterwards); and **volunteer experience** (self-realisation, adding to the joy of life – part of something good, making a difference, looks forward to next task or opportunity, learning good things, camaraderie and communicates joyfully about it) that would be engaging and rewarding.

Council and their teams were tasked with writing a rationale and key elements to sit alongside their area of expertise. All this fine detail would be our 'go-to' document in the future and what we are proposing to call the Annual Partnership Program.

I will keep you posted on progress, probably at the next General Meeting later in the year or online sooner if we can.

WARM TREES 19 is progressing well under the coordination and leadership skills of Jocelyn Plovits. Thanks Jocelyn for keeping everybody up to speed with the timeline for this year's partnership with the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands. The theme this year is ... you guessed it ... bikes and tulips ... the choice of the embassy. Our Chief Minister, Andrew Barr, has agreed to launch WT19 on Tuesday 2 July. There are still many opportunities to support Jocelyn with all the craft activities that she has on the go ... ask her ... she's here ... you'll remember last year you all worked on the pohutukawa blossom.

WORKING BEES continue each Tuesday and Thursday mornings under the direction of the Hort Staff member, Ryan Mallard. Thanks to Des King and Mike Woolley for their organising of the groups with weather alerts, job descriptions for the day, and all the administrative tasks that come with being an organiser of groups. Thanks to all the worker bees, for your ongoing commitment each Tuesday and Thursday.

THE HARVEST GROUP – more Friends who are engaged in their passion of gardening and other tasks relating to this group. Thanks to Organiser, Colette Mackay and her team of committed members of this group. The most recent Harvest Day on 4 May yielded the tidy sum of \$1521.60. The Discovery Garden is an inspiration to us all and many thanks too, to Ange Mc Neilly who you will find at the Discovery Garden most mornings in amongst the butterflies and beans and weeds working alongside the other volunteers.

THE JAKE KELLER SCHOLARSHIP- this year's winner, Andrew Colwell, will be working with Owen Bolitho and the Hort team on a significant irrigation scheme in a couple of months - probably late July/August placement.

SEASONAL TALKS – there have been a variety of these over the past year with the most recent being delivered by Professor Kate Auty, ACT Commissioner for Sustainability. She spoke to us on environmental reporting and communicating the science to the public. It sounds like a very dry old topic but to the contrary it was the most interesting and engaging presentation and previously a talk by Amelda Keys who took us on a journey through the history of labyrinths and the story behind our very own labyrinth in the Gallery of Gardens.

SUBMISSION – Friends, Max Bourke, AM and Roger Hnatiuk were invited to speak on our submission to the Legislative Assembly's Standing Committee on 'Nature in our City', very ably led by Ms Suzanne Orr, MLA. The presentation and submission are on the Legislative Assembly's website. Sincere thanks again to these superb submission writers.

THE ARBORETUM BOOK – steady sales (20-25 plus each month) are reported by Mel at the Curatoreum and particularly over holidays like Easter, Christmas and other festivals like Floriade. I am regularly asked about the next Arboretum Book...when is it happening...when will the old book go on sale etc. This is not for me to judge or say... a much wider conversation needs to be undertaken by those stakeholders and those who know about these things. So, it's not happening yet...and once again I will keep you posted on this. It has been noted as a Friends' activity in the new Strategic Plan so ... all in due course.

FRIENDS' FOREST – a report recently from Andrew Carter said how pleasing it was to see such a good survival rate from the last planting/working bee. His quick assessment suggests better than 95% of seedlings within the two enclosures have not only survived but have grown very strongly which all in all is a great result. Thanks, Andrew, for your liaison with Owen and your general oversight of our Friends Forest 100.

GUIDES – I'd like to thank firstly Lauren Brown, the Community Engagement Officer, for overseeing rosters and getting information out to our Guides; also to Sandy Linsley for her oversight of the Guides meetings, arranging agendas, providing PD sessions within the guides meetings ... the monthly Guides meetings are going very well by the way. Thanks to all the Guides who put their names on the roster on a regular basis. We thank you for your most generous contribution and time commitment to the Arboretum in all weather, keeping our visitors entertained and educated.

STEP – the 10th anniversary of the plantings at STEP ... Forest 20.... was held on a very balmy Friday evening quite recently. The gardens with their new signage, beautifully-swept paths, sponsored seat and garden looked magnificent. Chief Minister Andrew Barr attended this memorable event and planted a *Eucalyptus melliodora* to mark the occasion. The new shed is a highlight down there. If you haven't been to the STEP forest, take the opportunity. Thursdays are their working bee mornings.

ACT VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR – celebrations will be held here next week and I'm told that a Friends group ... have been nominated. We wish them all the best.

SEAT SPONSORSHIP- is a slow process. However the new flier has borne fruit already. I took a call from a gentleman in Sydney last week wanting to sponsor a seat at the 'arbitorium'. We had a conversation about pronunciation and moved on. The about-to-start Tracks and Trails project will have locations for several seats and there are eight names on the waiting list already for these seats. Forest Seats are valued at \$5,500. There are a couple of seats on the Event Terrace and in the Children's Garden awaiting sponsorship as well. There is a picnic setting in the Pod Playground available for sponsorship ... talk to me about it later! The other has been sponsored by the Kakatu Foundation in the USA, which has very close links to Colette and John Mackay and their in-laws who set up the Foundation.

CITIZEN SCIENCE - I'd like to congratulate and thank Roger Hnatiuk for his steadfast commitment to Citizen Science and in particular the Wollemi Seed Project. He has a team of volunteers who meet twice weekly in the Terrace Room on this seemingly laborious task. Roger and the Arboretum are moving forward with this Wollemi Citizen Science project and no doubt we'll hear more about it in the near future.

BONSAI WEEK - was a huge success this year. Congratulations to Leigh and his team. This year the highlight was the two internationally-renowned female Bonsai artists, Heike and Grlica. One of them was persuaded to part with her much-admired T-shirt ... quickly replaced by a Friends logoed shirt, and the T-shirt went on to make \$180 at the auction!

FRIENDS RAFFLE - will be held later in the year no doubt. We are always looking for suitable prizes. One of the prizes last year was donated by the Australasian Carnivorous Plant Society - thus because of so much interest they are here tonight as our guest speakers. I sold that winning ticket and was speaking to the winner only this morning who said she loved it. Again I'd like to thank Bronwyn Halbisich for all the management of this Friends' activity. I know she'd like more ticket-sellers this year, so when the time comes, please help out.

FRIENDS NEWSLETTER Thanks to our Newsletter Editor Mary Arnold who presents a quarterly newsletter. The latest is due out soon and Mary is keen to have you submit articles and photos of interest.

CHAIR'S TALKS – I'm occasionally asked to present a talk to various community groups, other Council members too. We love being ambassadors for the Arboretum and can speak well over the allocated time! My next gig is for Sue Brown's travel group at the Southern Cross Club on June 6.

FRIENDS' ZIGZAG GARDEN - in Central Valley. Last, but not least ... the launch of our Garden took place in the Margaret Whitlam Pavilion on 13 November last year. Bec Cody MLA came along

to name the Garden which, as you all know now, is the Salt Bush Garden and cut the Zig 19 celebration cake. She talked about what a vibrant group the Friends were with a passion and strong commitment to the NAC.

Then on 28 March this year our Zig garden 19 was formally launched in Central Valley (along with two other gardens). It was indeed a very special day in the Friends' history Friends' Forest, Friends' Garden on Dairy Farmers Hill. and now the Friends' Zigzag Garden in the Central Valley. We have made a huge contribution to the Arboretum and are very proud of this. All we have to do now is pay for it. I note to date donations have reached \$12,000 but there is still a way to go. Join us with your personal contribution and make the Friends' Garden your garden... we are very happy to share! Del can take donations tonight!

THANKS TO COUNCILLORS – Finally I'd like to pay tribute to my fellow Councillors and thank them very much indeed for the important roles they carry out, each making their own remarkable contribution. I especially appreciate the support they offer me. Tonight I'm sorry to say that Lainie Shorthouse, the STEP representative on Council, is standing down. Thank you Lainie for your enormous contribution to Council.

THANKS - to you for your attendance tonight but also for the wonderful contribution you make in and around the Arboretum in your various roles. I have said in my previous Chair's Reports that I liken you to gold.... you are worth your weight in gold.....Friends Gold...each one of you.

Thank you very much.

Trish Keller OAM
14 May 2019
