

Chair's Note

Dear Friends

After our reasonably mild and dry autumn, the nights are finally reaching freezing temperatures. Autumn colour seems to have been a bit variable across the species this year but as the Arboretum grows, the patchwork of colours is becoming more and more distinct against the background of the wider Arboretum. A recent shortcut through the

liquidambars took over 30 minutes as I stopped to try and capture the colours with my camera.



As I write to you, we are in the middle of volunteer week and while we give a shout out to all the volunteers across the ACT and beyond, I am reminded to especially thank all the volunteers that support the Arboretum for us and to the volunteers who help run the Friends of the National Arboretum Canberra.

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Chair's Note Continued



Thursday Working Bee doing forest maintenance

As I mentioned last time, we have extended the 20-year arboretum story documentary by about 3 minutes to include insights from Perry Lethlean, landscape architect, who was instrumental in creating the design of the forests, contours and gardens of the Arboretum. Please set aside some time (30 min and 39 sec now) to remind yourself of the Arboretum journey so far.

[National Arboretum Canberra: A Twenty Year Story - National Arboretum \(act.gov.au\)](https://act.gov.au/national-arboretum-canberra-a-twenty-year-story)



Photos show Roger Hnatiuk, Sharon McAuliffe and Joanne Maples with the Wollemi seedlings.

I also described last time that through the research endeavours of Roger Hnatiuk, a citizen science project exploring the morphology of the Arboretum wollemis, a number of young seedlings (72) were available for rehoming.



I'm pleased to report that all seedlings have been re-homed through a call out to Friends, word of mouth and a Market Stall on 6 May. Approximately \$2,500 was raised for the Friends to re-invest in the Arboretum.

May 14 was our AGM, where our treasurer, Lyn, was able to report a strong financial position with which we hope to achieve several outcomes for the Arboretum. These include: support of the popular Nature Play program, a Friends picnic setting and a significant Art Trail exhibit – to be admired now, in 50 years, and beyond. We are currently in discussions with the Arboretum to identify a suitable piece. We are also planning with the Arboretum to improve visual appeal of the landscaping around the Wide Brown Land sculpture.

The AGM also saw us welcome two new members to the Friends Council, Sandra Corrigan and Mark Lodder. Sandra and Mark will bring skills and perspectives to the group that will enrich the conversations and decisions that we make on behalf of members.

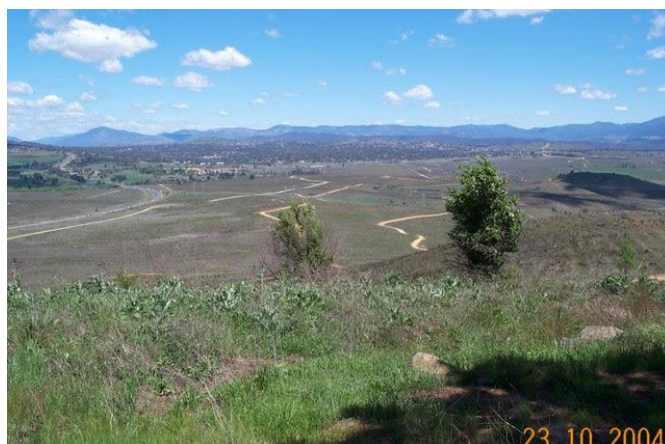
The highlight of the evening was however the presentation by Peter Kanowski, Professor of Forestry at the ANU, a Jury member in the selection of the successful Arboretum design and member of the tree selection committee. Titled, **Reviving the Arboretum dream: the making of the National Arboretum Canberra**, Peter described the story of the Arboretum from his first-hand experience, being embedded in the process. Peter shared facts, observations and anecdotes that reminded all in attendance of the scale and value of the Arboretum in our landscape.

I was particularly taken by some pre-Griffin history Peter provided of the discussion about establishing Canberra as the capital of Australia. The following are quotes from Joseph Maiden **in 1901**, botanist, public servant and significant contributor to the understanding and cataloguing of Australian flora.

“the whole of the Federal territory be looked upon somewhat in the light of a gigantic park, the streets and buildings to be inserted as details ... “
“we have no grand Arboretum in Australia, and the foundation of the Federal City gives us the opportunity of establishing one ... this would be of ornamental appearance and of great interest to the average citizen; it would also be of high [educational value] ... ”

One feels that over 120 years later, Maiden's vision has, in part, been realised.

These photos provided by Max Bourke AM also highlight the progress we have made over the past twenty years.





As always, don't forget to share your support, and in many cases, passion, for the Arboretum with your friends because we are always keen to welcome new members to our community. See you at the Arboretum!

Mike Woolley
Chair
Friends of the National Arboretum Canberra

Key Diary Dates for Friends

Wednesday 3 July 2.30pm Warm Trees Opening Ceremony Village Centre Arboretum

Sunday 7 July Free Screening 10am to 2pm: The National Arboretum Canberra - A twenty-year story

Tuesday 9 July – 12.30pm Seasonal Talk Guest Speaker David Rees
Topic: Butterflies of the Arboretum and ACT Region

Sunday 14 July Harvest Stall

Sunday 21 July Free Screening 10am to 2pm: The National Arboretum Canberra - A twenty-year story

Sunday 28 July Free Screening 10am to 2pm: The National Arboretum Canberra - A twenty-year story

Sunday 22 September Harvest Stall

Tuesday 9 Oct – 2.00pm General Meeting Seasonal Talk #3 –Speaker TBA

Sunday 1 December Harvest Stall

Wednesday 11 December NAC End-of-Year event –6-8pm Thank You to Volunteers

U3A Trees of the Arboretum Courses 2024- please enrol via the U3A

<http://www.u3acanberra.org.au>

Friday 23 August to 27 September, **U3A Course 4:** Hughes Community Centre, Room 3

Thursday 17 October to 28 November 2024, **U3A Course 2:** Hughes Community Centre, Room 3.

Warm Trees is off to Chile in a few weeks!

Get ready! Take a walk through the trees of Chile:

There are currently seven NAC forests with trees native to Chile:

Forest 12 *Araucaria Araucana* – Monkey puzzle – Chile's national tree

Forest 26 *Jubaea chilensis* – Chilean wine palm

Forest 45 *Luma apiculata* – Chilean myrtle

Forest 57 *Austrocedrus chilensis* – Chilean cedar

Forest 83 *Nothofagus macrocarpa* – Roble de Santiago

Forest 77 *Sophora toromiro* – Toromiro (Rapa Nui is a territory of Chile)

Forest 94 *Quillaja Saponaria* – Soapbark tree

In addition, *Podocarpus nubigenus* (cloud podocarp or Chilean podocarp) is also native to Chile. It is in the same genus as *P. totara* (the New Zealand Totara, forest 64) and *P. latifolius* (South African broad-leaved yellowwood, planned for forest 29 and already planted in Central Valley).

You can even recite poetry as you wander through the wonderful trees of Chile at the Arboretum. Margaret Groube, one of our regular Guides and host of the Poetry Forest Walk has identified several poems written about the Chilean trees.

Palm Wine Poem by Precious Okidika (2013)

We all love the taste of palm wine
That perfect blend of sweet and sour
That leaves within our mouths
The true nature of our world.
From late night
When tappers cut holes on palms
It drips down in tiny droplets
And by dawn fills our buckets.
We liked it sweet as children
When father at first light poured us some
Into his long horn from which we all drank,
But as men our taste differs.
Like father we like it brewed
The tastelessness of freshly brewed spirit
Distilled until every water is gone
And the sea from which new-borns emerge
It is the medium by which our elders pray
Palm-wine is on the table on which our meals are
set. Palm-wine is the soul of our clan.
It is our blessing and our curse.
It is the ocean in which we drown our fears
And the sea from which we draw our joy.



Photo by Mike Woolley: Vicki Woolley at Kyneton Botanic Gardens Victoria. The National Trust says this wine palm was planted in the 1870s. It is the largest and best-known example in Victoria.

Discovery Kitchen Garden and Harvest Group Update

(Article and Photos by Ange McNeilly unless otherwise specified)

Kitchen Garden



There were beautiful autumn days towards the end of May and despite some frosts overnight, the plants in the Kitchen Garden remained unaffected (the Malabar spinach, *basella alba* 'rubra' at left is a case in point, being frost tender in Canberra and still flowering madly at the end of May). The French marigolds continue to flower profusely on the north side of the garden. The crimson flowering broad beans, grown from seeds saved last year, are already flowering. The scarlet runner beans, usually cut back by this time of year, are still producing flowers and pods, as are the eggplants and chillies. If this mild autumn weather is due to climate change and a sign of things to come, then Canberra gardeners will be the beneficiaries and will need to take account of it in their future autumn gardening plans.



Above: Alyssum, French marigolds, pansies and dianthus



Above: Honeybees love both white and blue flowers of borage.

There are various brassicas planted in the garden such as Tuscan kale, variously coloured cauliflowers, broccoli, and ornamental kale. Colourful flowers include dianthus, pansy, viola, calendula, sweet peas, and the soon to be planted mixed cornflowers. Visitors to the garden are constantly encouraged to plant flowers amongst vegetables to encourage beneficial insects for pollination. Sugarcane mulch will be spread over the few patches of bare soil and watering will be scaled back during the winter months. Now is the time to go through seed packets to decide which vegetables and flowers to grow for spring.

In May, the *muelhenbeckia complexa* hedge at the back of the Sensory Garden was cut back by the Horticulture Team - look for the fabulous smiley face (thanks to Elliot) and the hedge at the entry to the Pod Playground has also been beautifully sculpted! Some of these prunings were potted up by the Harvest Group to make topiaries whilst longer stems were made into wreaths (see opposite), which work well and is another potential creative activity for the Harvest Group to participate in next year.



The repurposing of these prunings means less green waste dumped and enables the production of suitable items to sell.

Harvest Group

Autumn is always a very busy time due to the harvesting and processing of produce. To date, there have been three pop-up stalls selling fresh figs and two market stalls with total takings of \$7,362. The usual group of dedicated cooks processed a huge quantity of figs to make the delectable items much sought after and appreciated by people attending the market stalls.

The tables below show the dates and takings from market stalls held to date and the dates for those in future.

Market Stall Date	Takings
17/2/24 (pop-up stall)	\$842
24/2/24 (pop-up stall)	\$928
1/3/24 (pop-up stall)	\$631
24/3/24	\$2,341
5/5/24 (includes sale of 14 Wollemi)	\$2,620
Total	\$7,362

Future Market Stalls 2024
Sunday, 14/7/24
Sunday, 22/9/24
Sunday, 1/12/24



Above: Ange, Debbie, Maggie, and Helen at the market stall.

The next market stall on July 14 will feature the same variety of locally made, high quality items for sale so be sure to come along and support the Friends and the Arboretum. Also in July, there is the wonderfully colourful Warm Trees event at the Arboretum. Don't miss it and happy gardening!

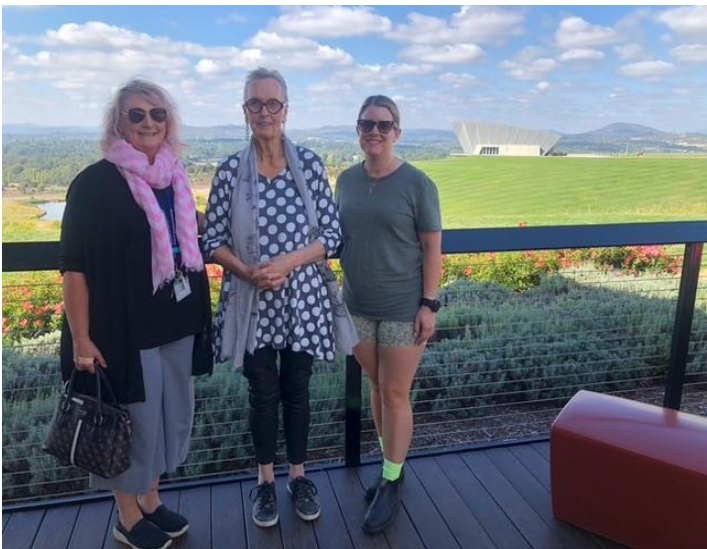
A Multi-skilled
Scholarship Winner

Interview by Del De Costa

At the pre-Christmas festivities late last year, we congratulated Katherine Harris as the winner of the Jake Keller Horticultural Scholarship for 2023.

I recently met Katherine, together with Trish Keller OAM who presented the award and Julie Collins, Head of Horticulture and Floristry at CIT.

Until a few years ago, Katherine had been a construction project manager in the ACT for several decades. But she wanted a



new career where she could be more creative. She had done some public space landscape work and enjoyed it, she likes gardening, and grew up in her family's big garden.

Of course, her thoughts turned to horticulture! She loves the CIT course and gets much personal enjoyment from her studies and she'll finish this coming June. In July, she will meet with the Horticultural Team at the Arboretum to discuss possible projects she could complete at the Arboretum as part of her Award.

Katherine feels very positive about her time as a student at CIT. Every class has a practical element to match the theory which consolidates the learning from that session. The teachers show their passion for the environment and our 'great outdoors', and are able to provide live case studies by taking students to such settings as orchards, wineries and, of course, STEP at the Arboretum.

Some of the subjects in her course have focussed on trees (such as pruning, tree maintenance) and Katherine has really enjoyed this aspect.

Julie explained that such hands-on learning was vital in the provision of today's learning courses. There is now considerable demand for CIT's plant propagation courses, so much so that they have now introduced a third course. Julie is proud of their CIT Bruce precinct with its four hectares of space encompassing an orchard, rose garden, pond and young arboretum. A lively, professional staff top it all off.

It was uplifting to meet a trio of women representing philanthropy, leadership and horticultural (arboreal) knowledge in midst of my favourite Canberra landmark – the Arboretum!

Can I be a NBPCA (National Bonsai and Penjing Collection Australia) Volunteer?

Despite general opinion, a volunteer in the National Bonsai & Penjing Collection does not need any specific bonsai skills or experience. The job is all about talking to our lovely visitors, making sure that the trees are safe and keeping the collection looking clean & tidy – easy!

On every shift you get to learn something new about the art of bonsai and specifically, about the individual trees in the collection. New volunteers are always 'paired up' with an experienced volunteer, until you feel confident to take off the training wheels. There is always at least one of the permanent staff or a senior volunteer on duty. If you want to give it a go, speak to Leigh or Sam in the NBPCA or just drop in and talk to one of the volunteers.

As well as always being on the lookout for new volunteers, the work of the NBPCA never stops. The National Australian Association of Bonsai Clubs Convention was recently held in Brisbane and Leigh and Sam were there representing the NBPCA, which operates as a partnership between the ACT Government and the Australian Bonsai Community.



They announced the winner of the NBPCA Perpetual Award for best Australian style bonsai to a Coast banksia styled by Tony Watt. The tree was representative of a banksia growing in a coastal environment and evoked images of beach scenes they have experienced along the east

coast of Australia. Tony's composition included a three-point display of a scroll picturing a Kookaburra, and an accent that included a sandy beach and banksia flowers upon a wooden bench.

Then there is the Artist in Residence program which allows bonsai artists from across Australia to share knowledge and learn techniques from the NBPCA artists in an exchange of ideas and mutual learning. This program is an annual event, with a position available in spring and autumn of each year. In August, we will be welcoming Joe Morgan-Payler from Victoria to the NBPCA.

So, there is a lot happening in the NBPCA and if you would like to be part of it by volunteering, please drop in to see us or contact the Curator, Leigh Taafe on 02 6207 8483 or leigh.taafe@act.gov.au.

Hope to see you soon. Sandra

National Wattle Day 1 September

By Suzette Searle, President of the Wattle Day Association Inc.

This year it's all happening in the forests, gardens, Pod Playground and Village Centre for National Wattle Day (1 September).

Thanks to Jennie Widdowson's survey, we know that there are 35 wattle (*Acacia*) species planted at the arboretum. Most (30) of these can be seen at the Southern Tablelands



Ecosystems Park. Of these 10 will be blooming and one of them is Australia's national floral emblem, *Acacia pycnantha* (Golden Wattle).

Find out more about wattles as you meander along **'The Wattle Walk'** in Forest 20, the Southern Tablelands Ecosystem Park (STEP). STEP volunteers will show you all the local wattles coming into bloom on this special one hour guided walk starting at 11 am on both Saturday 31 August & Sunday 1 September.

Left : Jennie Widdowson explains the features of the Blackwood (Acacia melanoxylon) flowering behind her at STE

There are other planting of *Acacia pycnantha* to enjoy around the arboretum too: at **The Pod Playground** and the **Golden Wattle Garden** (a pure stand of more than 120 trees in the forest understorey at the end of Cork Oak Road).

At the **Pod Playground** (2 pm on Saturday 31 August) enjoy the scent of 30 Golden Wattles in flower as you are told the story of why a wattle (*Acacia pycnantha*) became Australia's national floral emblem in 1988.

In the Village Centre, the Wattle Day Association will bring wattle colour and perfume to its popular **'Selfie Spot'** and **'Wattle Corner'** - an annual event since 2015. Showcasing the wood of wattles will be Bob Lorensene's delightful collection of turned mushroom shapes.



Left: The 'Selfie Spot' in the Village Centre

Wattle-themed gifts at The Curatoreum include the Friends' very own Golden Wattle seed collected from the arboretum's Golden Wattle Garden. All you need is space in your garden for a small tree up to 8m tall!



And last but not least The Ginger Group will be offering a wattle-themed treat to join in the celebration of National Wattle Day. Last year it looked like this.

Photo courtesy of The Ginger Group



Have you sat on **the Wattle Seat** yet? Ask at the information desk at the Village Centre to find out how you can walk or ride there.

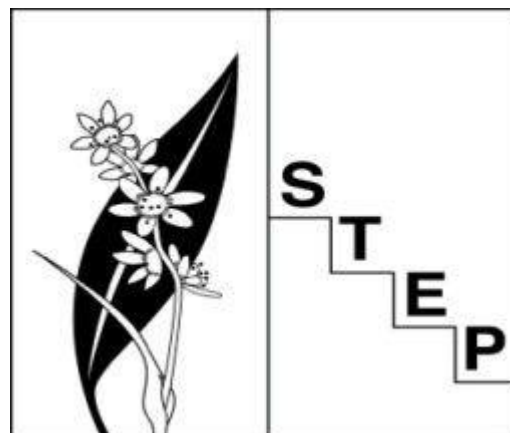


Left: Suzette and Pete from the Working Bee planting a new tree in preparation for National Wattle Day.

News from STEP – Southern Tablelands Ecosystems Park Forest 20.

Hello all

We are progressing well at STEP with our paths and signage. Visitors now have a clearly visible and mown walking track down through the belts of Eucalypts. This walk complements the brochure *Eucalypts of the Southern Tablelands Ecosystems Park* which can be picked up at the main entrance sign to STEP. This trifold publication highlights 16 Eucalypt species that can be seen down in Forest 20. On Saturday 11th May we offered a free guided walk down the trail for ACT Tree Week. Unfortunately this was a very wet day and nobody showed up! However, since the sunny days have returned, I am sure that we will see more visitors taking a walk under our stunning gum trees.



The other track that has been extended, in the form of a crushed granite path, is the one that links the main entrance to STEP down to the left and through the She-oak Nook. The Nook is a beautiful place to sit (there are some rounded rocks to perch on) and listen to the magical sound of wind through the Casuarina leaves. The National Arboretum horticultural staff have carried out most of the path extension and it is going to make a huge difference for walkers on wet days.



And finally, thanks to dedicated efforts of both STEP volunteers and Arboretum staff, we now have a sign for our Gallery of Grasses. I recommend taking a walk down to the lowest side of Forest 20, near the Boundary Road, to see the grass plantings. Although there are as many as 70 native grass species found across the Southern Tablelands, we can display

approximately 20 different ones in this site. Summer and early autumn is usually the best time to see the range of grass forms in all their glory, as we cut them back hard in winter. Fortunately, now that we have the sign, visitors can see the range of inflorescences (flowering stems) that makes native grasses such wonderful garden and ecologically significant plants.

Regards
Jane Cottee
President STEP

News from the Arboretum Team



Introducing Stuart Jeffress - A/g Executive Branch Manager

We are excited to introduce Stuart Jeffress as the acting Executive Branch Manager (EBM) for the National Arboretum Canberra and University of Canberra Stromlo Forest Park. Stuart joins us with a wealth of experience and a passion for conservation and community engagement.



Stuart's background is grounded in a deep connection to parks and conservation. Prior to his role as acting EBM for Building, Design, and Projects within EPSDD, Stuart spent 18 years with the ACT Parks and Conservation Service, gaining extensive knowledge in managing living collections and conservation matters. He holds a Bachelor of Land Management and has actively collaborated with volunteer and friend networks, recognising the invaluable contributions of community involvement.

Stuart's love for the Australian landscape, particularly the mountains, is evident in his favourite Arboretum forest: Forest 68 the Weeping snow gum (*Eucalyptus lacrimans*). This unique selection resonates with Stuart's experiences in the mountains and his commitment to preserving Australia's natural heritage.

Beyond his professional achievements, Stuart spends time with his three children and a furry companion named Obi. Together, they share a passion for mountain biking, horse riding, and embracing the great outdoors, whether in the mountains or along the coastline. Stuart's personal interests align with the ethos of the Arboretum, reflecting his dedication to fostering a healthy team environment and ensuring that Friends and volunteers are valued and included.

Please join us in welcoming Stuart Jeffress to our Arboretum and UC Stromlo family.

Podium Finish - at National Tourism Awards

Australia's best in tourism were recognised at the 2023 QANTAS Australian Tourism Awards ceremony held in Darwin during March.

It's BRONZE for the National Arboretum Canberra at the 2023 Qantas Australian Tourism Awards!

We are so proud to place in the 'Ecotourism' category. This achievement is a testament to the invaluable support and dedication of our esteemed Friends and volunteers, you have helped shape the National Arboretum into the iconic destination it is today.

As we reflect on this milestone, we are inspired to continue preserving biodiversity, fostering sustainability, and offering enriching experiences for all who visit the National Arboretum Canberra.

Forest Sculpture Gallery - an Update

Update on 'Drawing Breath' Sculpture: Collaborating with Engineers for Enhancement

Exciting developments are underway for the upcoming 'Drawing Breath' sculpture by artist Hannah Quinlivan, commissioned by the National Arboretum Canberra. Since the initial announcement last year, Hannah has embarked on a collaborative venture with engineers to elevate the scale and impact of the artwork.

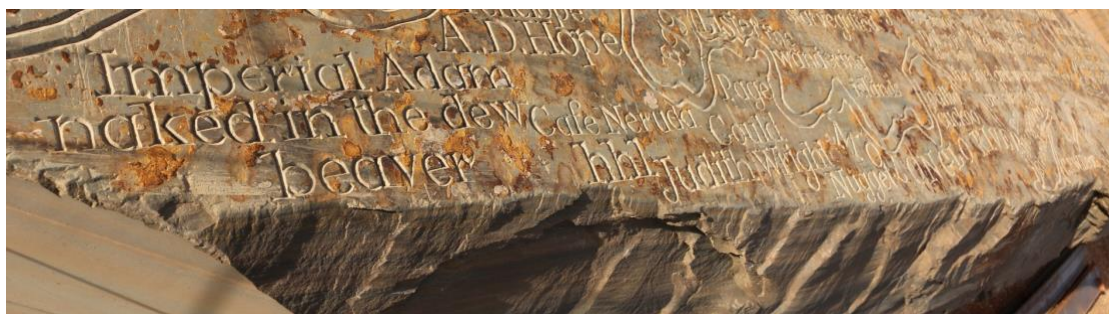
Hannah revealed plans to enhance the sculpture's presence by increasing its size ensuring a presence at the Arboretum's entrance. This enlargement aims to further captivate viewers and underscore the artwork's immersive quality within the natural surroundings.

Moreover, Hannah has partnered with lighting engineers to integrate cutting-edge LED technology into 'Drawing Breath'. The incorporation of LED lights will infuse the sculpture with dynamic illumination, allowing it to transform with the shifting daylight and create a captivating spectacle after dusk. This innovative approach underscores Hannah's commitment to merging art and technology in a harmonious display.

The project's progress is made possible by the generous support of the National Arboretum Canberra's 2022 Ambassador program and Forest Sculpture Gallery donors. We thank all involved for their invaluable contributions to the continued enhancement of the Arboretum.

As we anticipate the unveiling of 'Drawing Breath' in early 2025, these enhancements promise to elevate the sculpture into a landmark attraction, celebrating art, nature, and innovation at the heart of our Arboretum.

Ian Marr Sculpture Installation



Ian Marr's Mintaro slate sculpture 'A literary map of the Molonglo' has been installed at

the Arboretum. This 2016 work charts two vital aspects of the Canberra region: the Molonglo River, at the heart of the city of Canberra where it was dammed to form Lake Burley Griffin, and the writers and artists who made their lives here and created the intellectual and cultural landscape of the city and surrounds.

Writers' names include poets Geoff Page, David Campbell, Rosemary Dobson, A D Hope and Les Murray (who lived in Downer as a young man). Artists' names include (Elioth) Gruner, (William) Lister Lister and (Rosalie) Gascoigne, all known for their representations of the Canberra landscape. Other names include Café Neruda (well known for poetry readings) and Brindabella Press, a private press that published poetry and literary fiction, particularly that from the region.

The sculpture now lies within a grassy hillside beside the Pin oak forest, a picturesque location overlooking the Gallery of Gardens and Events Terrace, with views stretching across the Canberra landscape to which the sculpture refers.

Slate slab, 30.0 (h) x 380.0 (w) x 55.00 [d] cm

Introducing Richard Allan - Indigenous Tourism Officer

We would like to introduce Richard Allan, our new Indigenous Tourism Officer. Richard has released two new programs at the Arboretum that are getting rave reviews.

New Program: Walk on Country | **Friends Discount Code: Friends_WOC**

Bring the landscape to life allowing you to gain a deeper respect and understanding for Aboriginal Traditions and Culture.

New Program: The Art of the Boomerang | **Friends Discount Code: Friends_AOTB**

Understand the history of these ancient hunting tools while you create and learn to throw your very own boomerang.

Meet Richard!



My People are from Ngunnawal (Canberra), Bunjalung (Gold coast), Gamilaraay (Walhallow).

My interests are Sports and whatever my kids are into at the time. I also have my venomous snake handling license and also help catch and collect data from some of the worlds most venomous snakes.

What's your favourite spot at the Arboretum?

Top of Amphitheatre

What's your favourite Arboretum forest?

*Forest #79, Bottle tree *Brachychiton rupestris*. There is such a presence about them, you don't feel alone when you're in the forest with these trees.*

What part of your culture are you most proud of sharing in your tours?

The science behind our tools, our artefacts, and the art that is storytelling.

What do you have the most fun doing in your tours?

Challenging people to try something that they don't usually try, ranging from trying new food, tools and artefacts.

What do you like to do in your own time?

Sport, I'll try anything and everything when it comes to sport, I'm very competitive. If I'm not good at something, I will keep at it until I am.

What do you enjoy most about your role?

Teaching the younger generations about the history of Australia and seeing how engaged they are.

Bonsai Coolamon - Now on display

In a beautiful fusion of ancient traditions, Australian First Nation's man Kie Barratt was invited to delicately carve a coolamon from a bonsai at the National Arboretum in November 2023.



The coolamon was meticulously carved from a 15 year old River red gum using tiny handmade tools. The miniature coolamon measures just under 10cm and the tree has commenced the process of styling as a bonsai.

During his visit, Kie also carefully selected a Camden white gum in Forest 30, where he carved another coolamon measuring approximately 40cm long - a common size for a coolamon, traditionally used to collect food or cradle babies.

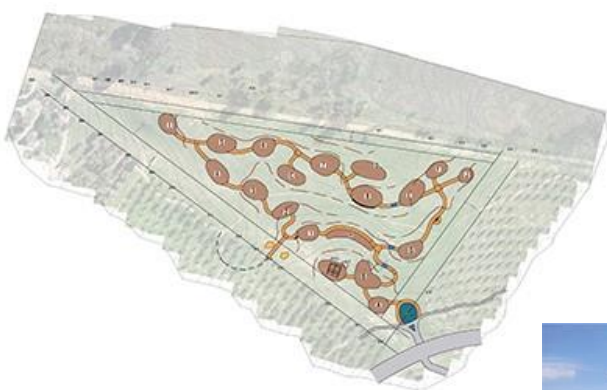
The coolamon is now on display at the Information Desk in the Village Centre.

National Rock Garden - works commenced in Forest 13

We are excited to announce the commencement of the relocation of the National Rock Garden to its new home within Forest 13 of the Arboretum. Following approval from the National Capital Authority in 2023, we have been preparing for construction and landscaping activities.

Fences are now installed, and landscaping work is set to begin. This includes constructing paths, rock display pads, interpretive signage, and the relocation and installation of the rocks that comprise the National Rock Garden.

The addition of the National Rock Garden will offer a captivating new experience for visitors to explore and enjoy. Its proximity to Forest 20, the Southern Tablelands Ecosystems Park (STEP), will further enrich educational opportunities for schools and international visitors. The diagram and picture below show different impressions of the National Rock Garden when it is complete.



Looking ahead to the coming months, we are optimistic about the weather conditions and eagerly anticipate providing further updates as the site progresses.



Jake Keller Scholarship - Building a Sustainable Garden



Jake Keller was a passionate educator and Foundation Member of the National Arboretum Canberra. The Jake Keller Scholarship links his two passions, the National Arboretum Canberra and education. Each year the Jake Keller Scholarship is awarded to an outstanding CIT horticultural student offering financial assistance as well as a work experience placement at the National Arboretum.

Jacob Bamblett was the 2022 recipient of the Jake Keller Scholarship who then returned in late 2023 to complete the work placement onsite. Jacob's project 'Creating A Sustainable Garden' involved planning, establishing and maintaining a garden. The site chosen for the project was the rocky outcrop area of Forest 68 and 75.

At the commencement of the project, site preparation was undertaken which involved the removal of weed growth and some Acacias in order to encourage strong healthy, regrowth. Plantings included native wildflower seed (*Rhodanthe* sp.) imported from other areas onsite at the Arboretum. This seed was distributed in natural depressions around the rocky outcrop.

Warm Trees - Adding Whimsy in Winter

Warm Trees is an annual event in July at the National Arboretum Canberra, where volunteers knit and crochet scarves that are then wrapped around the trees in a selection of forests and along the Events Terrace.



Warm Trees encourages people to visit the Arboretum and enjoy the forests at a time of year when they might not otherwise come. There are other benefits too – the scarves are taken down at the end of July, washed and made into wraps that are donated to local charities.

Each year the Friends partner with an Embassy, and volunteers are encouraged to knit scarves in the colours of the flag of the country. This year our partner is Chile, whose flag is red, white and blue. Their national tree is the Monkey puzzle (*Araucaria araucana*) which grows in Forest 12, along Cork Oak Road.

Treetops on tabletops

Organised for Canberra Tree Week 2024 and running in the Village Centre for the last two days of that week, was a display table (two tables actually) covered in samples of live materials cut from the trees in the Arboretum. These provided the starting point for lots of conversation with passing visitors—adults and children alike. I talked for more than half the time I was there, encouraging people to look, touch and smell. The star

performer was the Osage orange, but I talked to different people at various points about all the samples on the tables. Opening up seed pods was also a clear winner, with children in particular. Some children took samples away to the microscope for a closeup look before bringing them back.

I started out thinking that I'd tell simple stories about plants. My choices were:



- Cones are not flowers. But, like flowers, cones are there to make seeds.
- Bark protects trees. It helps control water uptake and loss.
- Many of Canberra's street trees are also at the Arboretum.

But, in fact, it was largely the tree trimmings that people were interested in. They listened to as many stories as I could remember about them. They told me a few too. Everyone seemed appreciative. We had autumn colour, interesting cones, acorns and seed pods, beautiful bark, a bit of petrified wood (borrowed from the back of the bonsai area) and some photos of trees. I think I was talking to visitors for more than half the time I was there.

One of the 'Treetops on tabletops' displays in the Village Centre for Canberra Tree Week 2024. Thanks to Marelle Rawson for the Marimekko ginkgo print tablecloths which were also a talking point at times

The display was a simple but effective way to engage visitors and it was great involving both Arboretum staff (mainly Keiran Wallace, who collected the samples the day before) and the Friends (mainly me, with assistance from Malise Arnstein and Maggie Hawes) doing the setup and talking) for this small joint project.

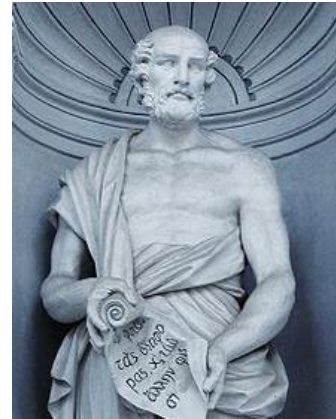
Joanne Maples
(thanks to Rhu Donald for the catchy title)

The first published botanist?

Have you heard of Theophrastus? He was a Greek philosopher and scientist, born around 371 BC. He studied with Plato, and then with Aristotle at the Peripatetic School¹. After Aristotle's death, Theophrastus became the head of the school for the next 36 years. The school flourished and at one stage had more than 2000 students.

¹ The school originally derived its name Peripatos from the peripatoi or colonnades of the Lyceum in Athens where the members met.

He was a polymath who wrote numerous works - a list gives 227 titles – on a wide range of subjects covering the whole field of contemporary knowledge, a sort of one-man Wikipedia. There are surviving works On Moral Characters, On Sensation, On Stones, and fragments on Physics and Metaphysics. In philosophy, he studied grammar and language and continued Aristotle's work on logic.



Theophrastus and botany

Theophrastus wrote two major botanical works, one entitled On the Causes of Plants, comprising eight volumes, and another, *Historia Plantarum*, translated as Enquiry into Plants. That one comprised 10 volumes.

Historia Plantarum is regarded as one of the most important books of natural history written in ancient times and was influential in the Renaissance. The 10 volumes look at plant structure, reproduction and growth; the varieties of plants around the world; wood; wild and cultivated plants; and their uses. Book 9, on the medicinal uses of plants, is one of the first herbals, at least in the western world, describing juices, gums and resins extracted from plants, and how to gather them.

Historia Plantarum is around 400 pages long and mentions 500 species of plants. It was translated into Latin in 1454 but not translated into English until 1916. It is regarded as the first scientific enquiry into plants and one of the first systems of plant classification, identifying regularities in, and differences between, plants. And just to give a couple of examples from the books:

In book 2 on tree and plant propagation he wrote that plants can grow spontaneously, from seed or from vegetative parts of the plant. Soil and climate influence growth. And although this seems self-evident to us today, at that time one view was that the air contains the seeds of every plant, and another was that plants arose when water was mixed with earth.

In book 5, on wood, he describes wood of different trees, and the effects of climate on wood, discusses which woods to use for specific purposes such as for carpentry, shipbuilding and for building houses, and the making of charcoal. And he mentions that timber from cedar and oak keep well and resist decay, which shipbuilders over the centuries knew from experience.

Today, Theophrastus has been called "the first real botanist" and this book is regarded as the start of all taxonomy of plants – centuries before the modern taxonomy of Linnaeus, who almost certainly had a copy ...

Theophrastus and Arboretum species

While preparing the U3A courses on the Trees of the Arboretum I came across Theophrastus a few times, in relation to the naming of some of our trees.

***Carya illinoensis* Pecan, forest 93**

Theophrastus described the Persian walnut (*Juglans regia*) and called the tree Karya, which is Greek for nut – and that's a name that lives on in *Carya illinoensis*, the Pecan. So Thomas Nuttall (1786-1859), the English botanist who named the *Carya* genus, was probably familiar with the works of Theophrastus, although it would have been either the Latin translation or the original Greek.

***Cercis siliquastrum* Mediterranean redbud, forest 31 (and *Cercis canadensis* Eastern redbud, forest 70)**

Theophrastus gave the name 'kerkis' to the Mediterranean redbud, choosing kerkis which means weaver's shuttle and refers to the resemblance shown to the flat, woody seedpods. The genus name *cercis* was used by Linnaeus when he named both redbuds that we have at the Arboretum. It seems highly likely that Linnaeus had a copy of Theophrastus' *Historia plantarum*, which is how he would know the name kerkis, that Theophrastus gave to the tree.

***Diospyros lotus* Date plum, forest 86**

Linnaeus named both the genus and the species, in *Species Plantarum*, but why did he choose the names? I came across a source that tells us that Linnaeus is known to have arbitrarily taken names simply because they were available. It goes into great detail on the origin of the name and concludes that the choice of the name *Diospyros* by Linnaeus is due to an identification by earlier (Renaissance) botanists of the name in the works of Theophrastus. It is hardly surprising that Linnaeus used available names – his major work, *Species Plantarum*, which was published in 1753, described over 7,300 plant species.

Some other links between Theophrastus and our Arboretum species

Figs (*Ficus carica*, forest 3) were widespread in ancient Greece, and their cultivation was described by Theophrastus in *Historia plantarum*.

Stone pine (*Pinus pinea*, forest 56), which Theophrastus called the Domestic pine, was also included in *Historia plantarum*.

There may well be other connections to Theophrastus – if you know of any, please let me know.

Theophrastus died around 287 BC when he was 85. He is said to have remarked "we die just when we are beginning to live". He was given a public funeral, and "the whole population of Athens, honouring him greatly, followed him to the grave."

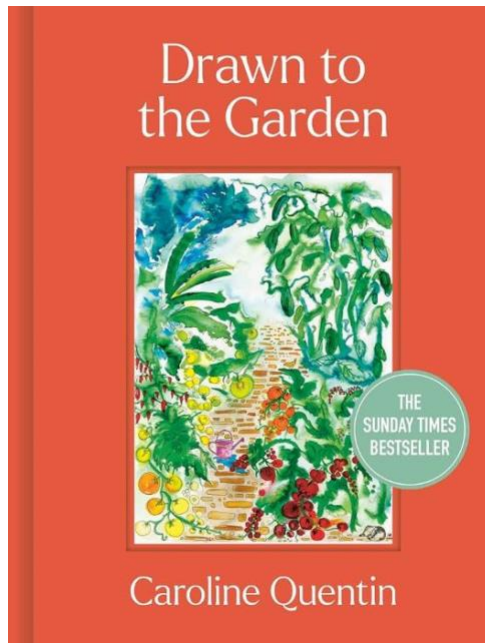
Jan Morgan

Editor's Note: Jan will be running another U3A course on the Trees of the Arboretum, starting on Thursday 17 October.

What's New at The Curatoreum– June 2024

A few of our current favourite books to see you through winter, plus a selection of gorgeous new timber Arboretum keepsakes.

Don't forget to show your Friends card in store for your 10% discount.



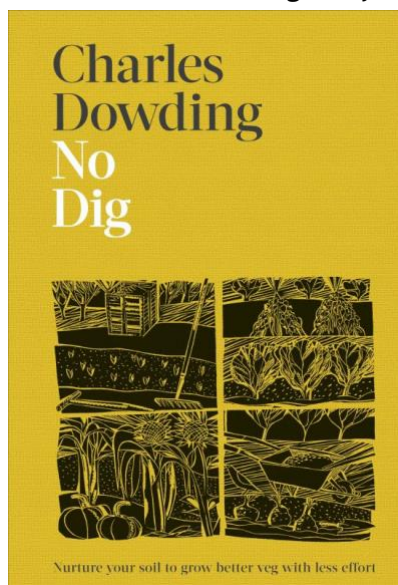
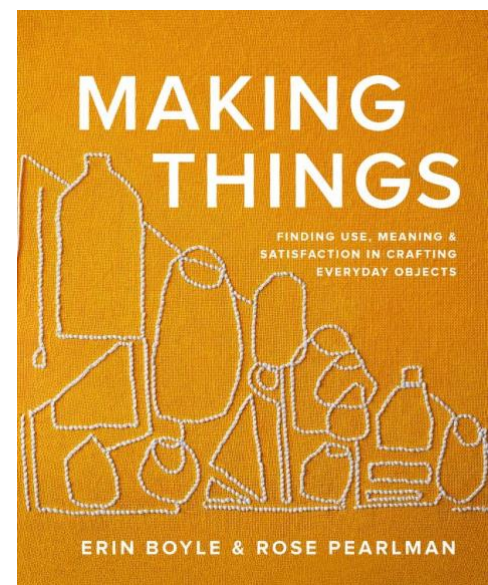
Drawn to the Garden by Caroline Quentin – \$39.99

Find solace in your outdoor space in this delightful horticultural journey with actress Caroline Quentin, as she draws on her life-long passion for gardening. In this book, Caroline shows how much joy she gets from spending time in her garden, whether it be grappling with the best way to grow plants and vegetables or raising seeds in her potting shed. Though she now has a large Instagram following, @CQGardens, her attitude to gardening remains the same - expertise helps but is not essential. Gardening should be fun and enjoyable, filled with the simple pleasures of planning, planting, harvesting, and cooking.

Making Things: Finding Use, Meaning, and Satisfaction in Crafting Everyday Objects by Erin Boyle and Rose Pearlman – \$49.99

Makers Rose Pearlman and Erin Boyle met in 2018 and immediately struck up a friendship, united by a reverence for everyday objects. Their approach towards craft reflects a shared commitment to sustainability and accessibility – as they write in Making Things' introduction, "Craft can be exquisite and exacting, the result of formal training and years of practice, but it can

also be experimental and messy and not quite perfect." *Making Things* champions handmade crafts that infuse the no-waste ethos with glamour and fun.



No Dig: Nurture Your Soil to Grow Better Veg with Less Effort by Charles Dowding – \$59.99

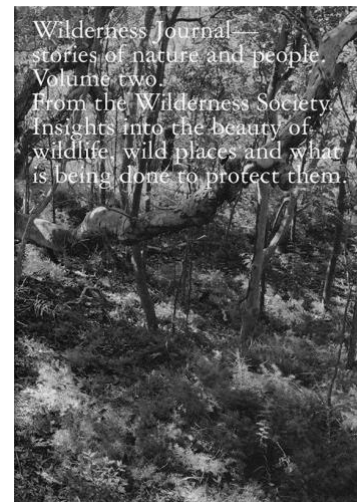
No Dig is an expert guide to helping you transform a weedy plot into a thriving vegetable garden by following simple steps achieved in a few hours and with plants in the ground from day one. The crucial factor is

understanding that not only is there no need to dig over the soil, but by minimising intervention you are actively boosting soil productivity and nurturing the fungal mycelium vital to all plants. This is the essence of the No Dig system that Charles Dowding has perfected over a lifetime growing vegetables.

No Dig gardening is also about utilising every inch of growing space and every moment of growing potential. By planting in succession, multi-sowing crops, interplanting fast and slow crops, and prolonging the process of harvesting, even small-space gardeners can be picking fresh produce each day of the year.

Wilderness Journal - Stories of Nature and People, Volume Two – \$39.99

Wilderness Journal is an evocative and energising celebration of nature, science, culture and art, from some of the world's finest photographers, scientists, artists, illustrators and writers. Dense with beautiful stories and photography from passionate protectors of nature, the Wilderness Journal Volume Two features tales of the record-breaking run from the top of the continent to the bottom, the search for the elusive night parrot, moments from the campaign to save the Franklin, the hunt for mythic chanterelle mushrooms, and that's just the beginning.



New Arboretum Keepsakes by Etchelon

We are thrilled to have recently worked with the talented locals from Etchelon who have crafted a range of timber Arboretum keepsakes, including a lovely layered fridge magnet, a range of keyrings, and a timber Wollemi themed notebook.



Designed and made here in Canberra from high quality, Australian timbers finished with Danish oil – so they even smell delightful too.

Friends Council Members (elected) May 2024

Chair: Mike Woolley
Deputy Chair: Fran Hinton
Treasurer: Lynley Rees
Secretary: Del Da Costa
Publications Officer: Nicole Pietrucha
STEP representative: Hugh Milloy
NBPCA representative: Sandra Corrigan

Members: Marelle Rawson Ian Chambers Maggie Hawes
 Barry Langshaw Mark Lodder

Donations and Sponsorship Manager: Trish Keller OAM (not a Council position)

Thank you to all our Sponsors and Contributors

If you have ideas for articles, or items that might be of interest to the Friends such as stories or photos from the Arboretum or further afield, please contact me Nicole Pietrucha on: pietruchanac1@gmail.com. Many thanks to the people who have contributed articles and photos for this and previous issues of the Newsletter, and given generously of your time to write, read and proofread. I could not do it without your help.

We ask all Friends to check your membership card for your renewal/expiry date!
And if you haven't joined already, then the time is right to become a Friend!

<https://friendsarboretumcanberra.org.au/membership>

