



FRIENDS of the *National Arboretum Canberra* *Newsletter 20 / February 2013*

Dear Friends

We did it! The absolutely wonderful National Arboretum Canberra is now open! Obviously we were part of a very large team, including the ACT Government, Arboretum Team and contractors, and we've had exciting times collaborating with them and supporting the Arboretum's development. Our thanks go to all involved. For some of us, the Arboretum has featured in our lives for nine years now, and we anticipate that the next stage will deliver more exciting challenges.

The Dawn Ceremony, held on 1 February to mark the official opening of the Arboretum, was a very special occasion with Mother Nature putting on a fantastic sunrise, never to be forgotten. I had the opportunity to thank all Council members and all members for their efforts publicly, and to point out that the Friends had already donated thousands of volunteer hours, a large seat for the Children's Playground, and the uniforms for the guides. It was very pleasing to hear other speakers acknowledging the Friends' contributions.

The Opening Festival on 2 February was also a great event. We had 150 volunteers involved—thanks so much to all of you. The Arboretum Team reported that there were 16,500 visitors and the park-and-ride system worked well, so this strategy could be repeated for other large events. It was really wonderful to work with you all, and to see the excellent patronage for the guided walks and guided bus tours—in fact the queue for the tour buses only stopped when the day finished!

The Opening Festival was all the more special because the new facility for the National Bonsai and Penjing Collection of Australia was opened on the same day. This is a world-class display and if you haven't seen it yet, please make time to do so—you will be amazed.

Last week we met with the new General Manager, Jason Brown, who is the new Arboretum representative at our Council meetings. He clearly values the support of the Friends and is working with us on a number of exciting ideas—I will send you reports as they are progressed.

We are planning to have an inaugural Friends' Dinner at the Arboretum on Friday, 5 April so please put that date in your diaries—more details available shortly

Also, we are working towards having a Friends' demountable room and office with a kitchen and toilets, located next to the Canberra Discovery Garden. This will be very useful for meetings and administration, as well as a place to refresh weary volunteers. Many thanks to the Arboretum Team for this initiative.

We are in discussions with the Arboretum Team regarding the nature of the Centenary Gift from the Friends to the Arboretum—please send any ideas/suggestions you may have regarding this to me at hackman@grapevine.com.au. A special event will be held to which all members will be invited, to see the gift (whatever it is) handed over to the Arboretum in this centenary year.

The feedback I am receiving about the work of all our guides is really outstanding. Visitors really appreciate your efforts and I thank you for undertaking the seven-unit training course and all the practising you did. Some 110 members undertook guide training and 30 bonsai explainers did their training too. But we will always need new guides and I already have ten people on the list for the next training sessions to be held later in the year, so please let me know if you are interested in becoming a guide.

I am happy to report a marked increase in memberships and we now have well over 2000 members and 4000 corporate/associate members.

See you at the Arboretum!

Jocelyn Plovits

Chair

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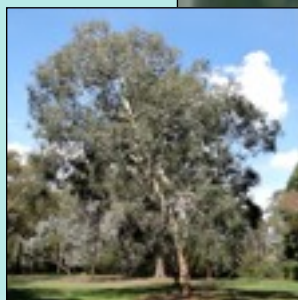
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Training our volunteer guides

BY JOCELYN PLOVITS

Congratulations to all the Friends who have completed the October and January training courses to be volunteer guides. As you can see from the picture below, it was a moment of celebration on 19 January when many of the 110 guides had their first session at the Village Centre (previously known as the Visitor Centre). Up until then, all the training had been off-site because we had been keeping away from the construction site.

Guides were kitted out for the Opening Festival in either the new shirt (with an embroidered Friends' logo) and hat, or a new Friends' T-shirt with the revised Friends' logo. The leaves have been spread out to make them more practical for embroidery/printing and the colours have been brought into line with five of those in the Arboretum logo (see our revised logo, page 1).

Trainees were not required to have prior knowledge and they undertook a combination of information sharing, practical guiding, and presentation skills. The feedback from the guides has been wonderful.

A special thanks to Roger Hnatiuk and Max Bourke for co-writing the course materials with me, and for delivering the course with me too. Christine Goonrey ran two excellent sessions on presenting material as a guide.

Volunteer guides at the entry to the Village Centre on 19 January
PHOTO BY MARTIN WRIGHT

Special segments were provided by Grant Bowie (National Bonsai and Penjing Collection of Australia), Marelle Rawson (Arboretum artworks), Jennie Widdowson (Arboretum geology), Cathy Robertson (STEP Forest 20), Cris Brack (ANU), and Matthew Friend (Canberra Discovery Garden). Participants were asked to provide two short written reports about tree research and their interests, and they found this process very helpful. I am hoping to capture this interesting information, possibly as part of the Friends' website.

Marelle Rawson has kindly taken on the complexities of making sure all the guide uniform items fit, so there is some swapping and reordering underway.

The next training sessions are likely to be held in July/August so if you're interested in becoming a guide, please contact me at hackman@grapevine.com.au.

Cris Brack addressing trainees in the classroom at Jerrabomberra Wetlands on 22 January

PHOTO BY MAX BOURKE



Preparations for the opening

BY LINDA MULDOON

January proved to be a very busy month for many Friends working behind the scenes.

We finalised the revised Friends' logo so that we could order branded clothing and we produced a new version of the Friends' brochure, ready for the big event. We also manned a tent in Commonwealth Park on Australia Day to promote the Arboretum Opening Festival, promote the Friends and sell our calendar.

The National Bonsai and Penjing Collection of Australia moved from its temporary accommodation in Commonwealth Park to its impressive new home at the Arboretum—a move that took much planning, much care, many hands and many hours.

On 29 January, all staff, contractors and guides were required to attend an Operational Induction Session in the Village Centre, led by Hannah Semier and Jason Brown of the Arboretum Team. This also enabled us to view progress within the building, including watching a



Roger Hnatiuk and Grant Bowie photographed through the window of the new Bonsai Pavilion on 31 January

PHOTO BY JEANETTE HAHN

Top: The bonsai display ready for inspection

Below: Friends at the 31 January briefing

PHOTOS BY LINDA MULDOON



Above: Friends manning the tent in Commonwealth Park on Australia Day

Right: Craftman working on the inlaid timber floor on 29 January

craftsman who was still working on the inlaid timber floor feature within the main entry.

The new guides' uniforms and volunteers' T-shirts had to be sorted and distributed to the wearers.

All Friends' volunteers who were scheduled to work at the Opening Festival on 2 February were required to attend a briefing by Kimberlee King of Earlybird (the Event Manager) and Jocelyn Plovits on 31 January.

We could then go home for a few hours before many of us were returning for the Dawn Ceremony on 1 February.



The Dawn Ceremony: 1 February 2013

BY LINDA MULDOON

Two hundred Friends were honoured to attend the Dawn Ceremony for the official opening of the National Arboretum Canberra.

The ceremony was scheduled to start at 5:45am but we (the Friends) met in Civic at 5:00am to catch four Murrays buses to take us to the Arboretum. I'm sure we all slept with one eye on the clock because most people arrived early. We also found that driving around Canberra between 4:00am and 5:00am is quite speedy as there is virtually no traffic.

We arrived at the Arboretum in total darkness, but the route to the main entrance was lined with young people holding lanterns and the glass panels in the stone walls revealed subtle blue lighting with leaf patterns. Gum leaves from an Aboriginal smoking ceremony still smouldered on the ground.

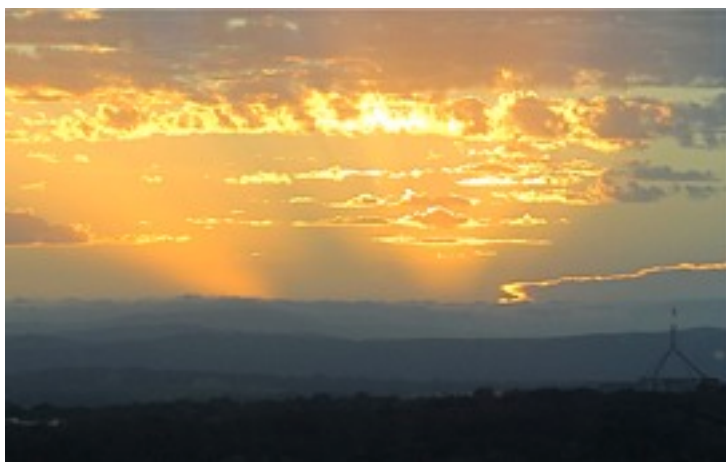
Right: Jocelyn Plovits with Kimberlee King

PHOTO BY JEANETTE HAHN



This was the first opportunity for members of the Friends to explore the Village Centre's interactive displays

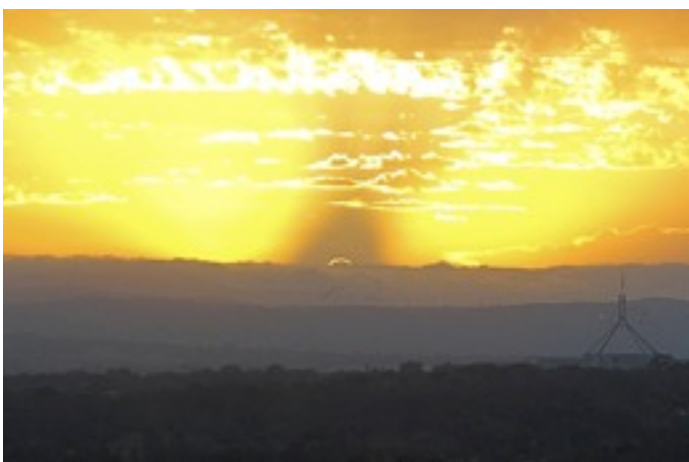
The lightshow outside began with two rays of light and a bright golden outline around a cloud on the horizon



Alex Sloane (left) was MC and as a hint of daylight crept into the Village Centre the ceremony got underway

PHOTOS BY LINDA MULDOON

A flock of birds took flight around Parliament House as a golden-edged arc appeared in the centre of the light rays





There was an array of speakers, including Jon Stanhope, ex-Chief Minister of the ACT (above), who had travelled back from his new post on Christmas Island for the occasion, current Chief Minister Katy Gallagher MLA, Senator the Hon. Kate Lundy representing the Prime Minister, the Hon. Simon Crean MP, John Mackay, Chair of the Arboretum Board, and Jocelyn Plovits, Chair of the Friends (above right).

Music was provided by the Canberra-based Griffyn Ensemble (right).

PHOTOS BY LINDA MULDOON



Michael Sollis of the Griffyn Ensemble had been working with the students of Giralang Primary School and had composed a *Song of Trees* which included the names of all the Arboretum tree species. It began with a chant for two treble voices and one tenor voice: 'Western Queens-land White Gum—Wall-an-gar-ra White Gum—Or-ie-n-tal Sweet Gum—Hill-grove Spot-ted Gum—Small-leaved Gum—Brittle Gum—Mor-ris-by's Gum—Scrib-bly Gum—Red Gum—Blake-ly's Gum Rib-bon Gum—Moun-tain Gum—Wee-ping Snow Gum—Cam-den White Gum—Spot-ted Gum—Snow Gum.' The song continued with tree names grouped together until all names were delivered. This was very well-received and the audience sat spell-bound with their faces bathed in the early morning light (see right).



Students from Giralang Primary School checking out the displays

The ceremony ended as daylight came. Refreshments were served and the guests went back to exploring the building and the displays. The mood was very upbeat at our extreme fortune in having such a spectacular sunrise on this particular day and even the birds putting on a show—but perhaps they do that every day and we're just not around to watch. This ceremony was a truly unforgettable experience!

Below: The speakers went out to the south terrace for photos after the ceremony and this is just part of the group. From left to right: Wally Bell (representing the Ngunnawal people), Jocelyn Plovits, The Hon. Simon Crean MP, Katy Gallagher MLA, ACT Chief Minister, Senator the Hon. Kate Lundy, and Adrian Brown (representing the Ngunnawal people).

PHOTOS BY LINDA MULDOON



What a roof!

ABOVE PHOTOS BY JEANETTE HAHN

Happy 100th Birthday!

The Griffyn Ensemble will perform in an ABC Classic FM production of *Sunday Live* on Sunday 10 March. This will feature Michael Sollis' arrangement of Urmas Sisask's *Southern Sky*. Astronomer Fred Watson will provide commentary between movements.

Be seated at Llewellyn Hall by 2.50pm for 3.00pm **FREE**

The Griffyn Ensemble will also be performing a whole concert about TREES in August . . . details later



The Opening Festival: 2 February 2013

BY LINDA MULDOON

This proved to be a very busy day for the Friends' volunteers. It was day one of action for the walk guides and the bus guides were kept very busy with 45-minute tours departing every 20 minutes. There were rosters for Friends manning the Information tent and the Friends' tent where we sold books, calendars and new memberships. Just in case anyone could miss this bright display, Sherry McArdle-English was there with the microphone inviting customers. Other Friends worked as roaming information sources, handing out programs and generally helping people find their way.

The day began quietly with few people around as the public were being bused in from various locations. I was able to appreciate the now completed inlaid wood floor design at the entry and learn a little about it (see right).

The sign about it on the wall says 'This inset floor feature represents the average grown trunk diameter of every tree planted in the National Arboretum. As many of the forests in the Arboretum are endangered species, their timbers have been represented here by reclaimed Australian hardwoods. The largest ring represents *Sequoiadendron giganteum* giant sequoia, which has an average grown trunk diameter of six metres. These trees are planted in Forest 33.'

At 10.00am Mark Carmody, MC for the day, introduced Beth N Ben, the first act on the main stage who played in very windy overcast conditions for 40 minutes. At least the windy conditions were good for kite-flying and both the professionals and those making their own kites had things underway.

Another popular activity was making terrariums. Children could choose their container, their medium, and select from a good supply of small plants. Then they could get to work and top it all off with their choice of small pebbles (see page 8).

Towards 10:45am people began gathering near the stage as Chief Minister Katy Gallagher was due to officially open the National Arboretum Canberra to the



Above: Mark Carmody introducing Beth N Ben on the main stage

Below: The completed inlaid wood floor design



The early part of the day was cool, quiet and overcast
PHOTOS BY LINDA MULDOON

Introducing *FRIENDS' TOP-SHOTS*

All Friends are invited to submit their best photo of the month to this ongoing competition. Given that our newsletter editor is also an avid photographer and we would welcome her participation, the Friends' Council will have a small judging panel of Sherry McArdle-English, Spero Cassidy and Jocelyn Plovits to select the best photo (or photos) each month to display on our website.

The photo must feature something at or about the National Arboretum Canberra and be taken in the month of submission.

A maximum of one photo per photographer per month is to be sent by the last day of the month, beginning with March 2013, in medium-size JPEG format (up to 1MB) but also state the MB of the full-size image (which may be required later).

Send photo as an attachment to: contact@arboretum.org.au

The top photos selected each month will also be part of an annual display at the Arboretum and become part of a broader competition which will be announced in our next newsletter.



Above: Making terrariums

community. Later the Chief Minister also officially opened the Bonsai Pavilion.

The next act on stage was Freshwater, an all-women group, and they were followed by Roger Hnatiuk who gave a talk about the bonsai collection and Cris Brack who talked about forestry projects at the ANU.

At 1.00pm Peter Tonkin, Village Centre Architect (of Tonkin Zulaikha Greer), gave a ten-minute talk and he was followed by David Shorthouse who talked about the STEP site (Forest 20).

The next speaker was Landscape Architect Chris Johnstone (of Taylor Cullity Lethlean) who spoke about his early experiences on the site and how they walked in the cork oaks and then in the Himalayan cedars and felt a completely different atmosphere in the two forests. That prompted them to conceive the idea of having different forests over the entire site which became the basis of their competition entry.

Above: The community waiting for the Chief Minister and the Chief Minister Katy Gallagher declaring the National Arboretum Canberra Open. Mark Carmody praised the Chief Minister for wearing a sprig of the centenary correa 'Canberra Bells'.

Below: Landscape Architect Chris Johnstone

PHOTOS BY LINDA MULDOON





From the top: The clouds lifted, the sun shone and the people came in their thousands! Kite-flying on the Amphitheatre turf was a huge success. People queued at the kite-making tent and suddenly there were lots of people everywhere. People sat on hay bales near the stage and all day long the Bosai Pavilion attracted the young, the elderly and those in between!

PHOTOS BY LINDA MULDOON



*Above: Sherry McArdle-English MC'd next to the Information tent
Above right: The Information tent was busy all day*



Below: One of our guides leading a walk on Dairy Farmers Hill



Above: Trish Keller maintained order as people boarded the tour buses but the queues were endless

*Above: A talk on the STEP site (Forest 20)
PHOTOS BY LINDA MULDOON*

Our 150 Friends' volunteers put a great deal of effort into this Opening Festival. Four different walks were led by our guides at regular intervals throughout the day. That was probably like being thrown in at the deep end but now they are all very well prepared for the task ahead—that of leading a regular program of guided walks.

And no doubt Canberrans were savouring the moment of reclaiming this site as theirs—they certainly seemed to be in a happy and tolerant mood, though perhaps that was the influence of the wonderful free-flying kites?



TREES IN FOCUS

Eucalyptus michaeliana (Hillgrove spotted gum)

BY LINDA MULDOON

Hillgrove spotted gum occupies Forest 55 which is located along the Arboretum's back fence. The Friends removed the pink tree guards as part of a working bee on 19 August 2012 and the young trees have grown considerably since then.

This will surely be an impressive forest as the attractive trunks change colour with the seasons. It is native to three separate areas: one is east of Armidale in northern NSW (Enmore to Hillgrove and Wollombi—hence its name); another is near Wyong, north of Sydney; and the third area is in south-eastern Queensland. The species is listed as threatened.

It is a medium to tall tree growing to 30m in height with a smooth bark which sheds in flakes. The lance-shaped leaves measure 12–20cm long and 2–3cm wide. They are a dull green colour but slightly translucent so that they look a brighter green wherever the sun shines through. New leaves are bright greenish gold.



Same trunk photographed in September (left) and February



Left: Our young trees in Forest 55 are making good progress

Below left: Buds are a bright light green

Below right: These are immature gumnuts; they turn to dark grey as they mature



Mature leaves (left) and new leaves (right)

The buds are carried in clusters of three to seven and the main flowering period is spring in this region. The white flowers are small, about 1.5cm in diameter but as they appear in clusters, flowering can be quite showy. The gumnuts turn dark grey as they mature.

This species usually maintains some low branches, fairly close to the ground.

REFERENCES

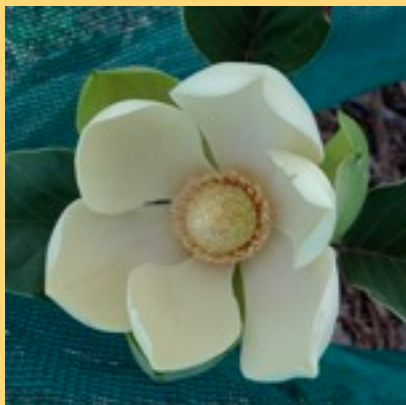
PlantNET NSW Flora online
Yallaroo.com.au

This tree is growing on the Eucalypt Lawn at the the Australian National Botanic Gardens, Canberra

PHOTOS BY LINDA MULDOON



FOREST TALK



FIRST FLOWERS ON THE CHINESE EVERGREEN MAGNOLIAS

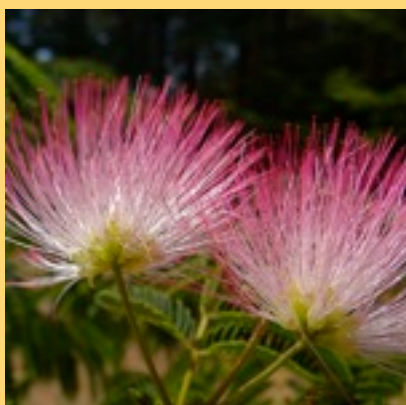
It took three visits in December to catch one of these *Magnolia delavayi* in full bloom. The flowers are very transient and they pass from bud to flower to immature fruit in a day. These endangered magnolias are in green shaded cloth guards within the southern magnolia host forest (Forest 7, near the Himalayan cedars).



SOUTHERN MAGNOLIA ATTRACTS FIDDLER BEETLE

The Fiddler Beetle (*Eupoecila australasiae*) feeds on nectar and lays its eggs in rotting logs or in damp soil under logs. The grubs feed on rotting timber. They are harmless to humans and are found in all Australian states except WA.

PHOTOS BY LINDA MULDOON



MORE FLOWERS ON THE PERSIAN SILK TREES

Just a few of these *Albizia julibrissin* trees flowered last year but this year quite a number are flowering, revealing that there is considerable variation in flower colour and flower size. They occupy Forest 6, near the Himalayan cedars.

SIZING UP THE DRAGONS

Tree measuring got trickier on 19 February when we set out to measure alternate dragon trees (*Dracaena draco*). One person is poking a tape measure through the birdnetting, while one clears the gravel. Another takes the readings and another records: total height, trunk height and trunk diameter.



FIRST FLOWERS ON THE CHILEAN MYRTLES

These *Luma apiculata* trees look like neat little shrubs now but they should grow to about 15m in as many years. They have small dark green leaves and their white flowers are about 1cm across. You can find them in Forest 45 along the Arboretum's back fence.

TREKKING ALONG THE BICENTENNIAL NATIONAL TRAIL

Belinda Richie was the first long-distance trekker to pass through the open Arboretum on 3 February. Belinda had already travelled the 800km from Healsville in Victoria and was accompanied by local equestrians to Hall and then on to Gundaroo the following day. Belinda is from Armidale and is self-reliant with a satellite phone and solar panel.

PHOTO BY JENNY COSTIN



WORKING BEE ON 16 FEBRUARY

There were plenty of takers for this working bee which was the first to be held on a Saturday. Our job was to weed around the dam and while we were waiting for Adam (who was looking after a bus tour) Max gave us a lesson on which plants were weeds. By the end of the session we had accumulated an impressive heap of weeds and we saved Canberra from some monstrous thistles (see right). The old adage that 'many hands make light work' is definitely true.



2013 PROGRAM OF EVENTS FOR THE FRIENDS

- **8 March** Eve Sawa's exhibition of paintings: **Arboretum Magnificenty**, opening at ANCA Gallery, 6:00pm to 8:00pm at 1 Rosevear Place (off Antill Street, Dickson)
- **12 March** General meeting
- **5 April** **Inaugural Friends' Dinner at the Arboretum**
- **9 April** Council Meeting
- **13 April** Working Bee
- **14 May** **Annual General Meeting**
- **8 June** Working Bee
- **11 June** Council Meeting
- **10 August** Working Bee
- **13 August** General Meeting
- **10 September** Council Meeting
- **8 October** Council Meeting
- **12 October** Working Bee
- **12 November** General Meeting
- **30 November** **Friends' End of Year Picnic**
- **10 December** Council Meeting

Thank you

For the last two years, Linda Muldoon, Council member, photographer and publisher extraordinaire, has almost single-handedly produced the fabulous Friends' calendar.

I know you will all join with me in sending our thanks to Linda because her efforts raise many thousands of dollars for the work of the Friends. In particular, this year these funds were used to provide the uniforms for our brand new Volunteer Guides.

Jocelyn 

FACTA WALKS IN WESTBOURNE WOODS ARBORETUM

- 10 March** Remarkable Trees in the Woods
led by John Turnbull Ph 6281 5991
- 14 April** Trees from the Nursery to the Bush
led by Frank Grossbechler Ph 62953937
- 12 May** The Fungi and Tree Diseases of Westbourne Woods
led by Jack Simpson Ph 6239 4870
- 9 June** Tree Domestication and Breeding
led by Alan Brown Ph 6281 1569
- 8 July** Australian Trees in Westbourne Woods Arboretum
led by Warwick Wright Ph 6281 3088

Free guided walks through the grounds of the Royal Canberra Golf Club. Meet at 9:30am at the gate, off Bentham Street, Yarralumla

No dogs allowed. For more information contact The Friends of ACT Arboreta on Ph 6251 4463.

Membership application form

Please complete the form below **OR** go to **www.arboretumcanberra.org.au** where you can join online and make a secure payment.

Yes, I/we wish to join the Friends of the National Arboretum Canberra Inc.

1. Title First name

Last name

2. Title First name

Last name

Address

.....

..... Postcode

Telephone (h) (w)

Email address

Do you agree to receiving notices of meetings via email?

YES/NO Date of application

Please tick your relevant membership category:

☐ **Single (\$25.00)** ☐ **Association or club (\$50.00)**

☐ **Concession (\$10.00)** ☐ **Corporate Friend (\$2000.00)**

☐ **Household (\$30.00)**

Memberships are due for renewal in December each year

Please tick your method of payment

☐ **Cash** ☐ **Direct deposit**

☐ **Cheque** (cheques must be made payable to the Friends of the National Arboretum Canberra Inc.)

Details for direct deposit are:

WESTPAC, Petrie Plaza, Canberra, ACT

Account—Friends of the National Arboretum Canberra Inc.

BSB No. 032719 Account No. 375379

If making a direct deposit, please make sure that you record your name so that your membership can be verified.

Send applications to : **The Secretary**

Friends of the National Arboretum Canberra Inc.

PO Box 48

Campbell ACT 2612

Please remember to notify us about changes to your contact details

Contact

You can contact the Friends at **friends@arboretumcanberra.org.au** or via our website on **www.arboretumcanberra.org.au** or by phone on **0406 376 711** during business hours

Friends of the National Arboretum Canberra Inc.

OFFICE BEARERS

Jocelyn Plovits, *Chair*
Trish Keller OAM, *Deputy Chair*
Colette Mackay, *Secretary*
Richard Bear, *Treasurer*
Spero Cassidy, *Events Co-ordinator*

COUNCIL MEMBERS

Cathy Robertson, *STEP Representative*
Linda Muldoon, *Publications Editor*
Sherry McArdle-English

The Council (all of the above) meet on the second Tuesday of each month. We invite any member interested in joining the Council to contact us. We would definitely welcome more faces as we need five members for a quorum which is sometimes difficult to achieve.

LIFE MEMBERS

Sherry McArdle-English
Roger Hnatiuk

HONORARY MEMBER

Jon Stanhope

Newsletter

The newsletter is published quarterly. Please contact Linda Muldoon on **lindaon@grapevine.com.au** if you would like to contribute an article.

The Friends thank the ACT Government, ActewAGL, Supabarn and Yarralumla Nursery for their support.

Information prepared by the Friends of the National Arboretum Canberra Inc. February 2013

