



DRAFT MINUTES

GENERAL MEETING **Held on Tuesday 8 November 2022 at 5.30pm** **in the Margaret Whitlam Pavilion, National Arboretum, Canberra**

1. **Welcome** – Trish Keller, OAM (Chair)

Trish welcomed everyone to the meeting and then introduced Scott Saddler AM, Executive Branch Manager, National Arboretum Canberra to make the Acknowledgement of Country.

2. **Arboretum Update** – Scott Saddler AM

Scott thanked the Friends for the opportunity to speak and updated the audience on recent rainfall – in the past 22 months, there has been 2.17m of water, versus an average of 617mm per year. Most of the trees are doing exceptionally well, except for a few which are struggling, presumably from too much rain. The challenge of course is the mowing. And, further, visitors will need to beware of snakes; and tracks and trails will remain muddy and boggy in parts.

Boundary Road is still scheduled to be asphalted and once completed, the Arboretum will be able to hold large events on-site as there will be two exits for traffic. It is likely that by 2028-29, there will be 14,000 residents living in the suburbs just beyond the Arboretum limits.

The NAC and Friends End-of-Year Thank You event is scheduled for Tuesday 13 December.

Scott also noted the following information:

- The move to the Arboretum of the National Rock Garden has been delayed to August 2023, partly due to rains.
- The Arboretum is still seeking Ngala Bus Drivers – an 'O' licence is required and training is given.
- Contour, the arts sculpture trail held in October, was very popular.
- The Arboretum is commissioning a large, attractive sculpture for the front dam, costed at \$200,000 of which half is sought via a community grant and fund raising for the other half (almost there).
- The 10th anniversary/birthday celebration for the Arboretum will be held on Friday 10 February in the form of a gala ball. The Arboretum is hoping to fill the Village Centre!
- Scott paid tribute to Christine Callen especially for taking on Cally's role while the latter is recovering from an unfortunate injury.

Trish thanked Scott for his attendance and informative update.

3. **Attendance:**

Trish Keller OAM (Chair), Christine Callen (NAC), Debbie Cameron, Del Da Costa (Secretary), Rachael Dawes, TCCS (Speaker), Alan Doolan, Jocelyn Fitzhardinge, Margaret Groube, Maggie Hawes, Fran Hinton, Cathy Ikin, Janet Kay, Yvonne Kilgour, Wendy Launder, Joanne Maples, Hugh Milloy, Leigh Mitchell, Nicole Pietrucha, Lyn Rees (Treasurer), Scott Saddler AM, Rosie Pate, Agnes Walker, Jennie Widdowson, Anthony Widdowson [24].

Apologies: Helen Hemphill, Colette Mackay OAM, Ange McNeilly, Marelle Rawson, Carolyn Thomas, Mike Woolley, Vicki Woolley.

4. **Minutes** of the last General Meeting held on 13 September 2022 were accepted without change (moved: Fran Hinton; seconded Lyn Rees). Carried.

There were no **Matters Arising**.

5. **Chair's Report – Trish Keller OAM**

Trish highlighted the following items:

- Firstly, her thanks and appreciation to the Friends' Council – all the projects initiated by the Friends are humming along, eg sales of 2023 Calendars, Golden Wattle seed packets, and the Wollemi Pines.
- The Arboretum History Project – approximately 10 interviews are underway and a 20-minute video is the end-product which will hopefully be launched at the 10 February event.
- Market Stall – there is one more for the year on 26 November. Our continued thanks to Colette Mackay OAM for her guidance and energy in coordinating these stalls which raise a great amount for the Friends, although we are desolate that Colette is stepping down from her various roles with the Friends – she has played such an integral part of the Friends for so many years.
- Thanks to the National Arboretum Canberra team for all they do to help the Friends and make the Arboretum such an amazing place to be.
- Nominations for the 2022 Recognition Awards are now open until the end of November. This year's Assessment Panel comprises Jocelyn Fitzhardinge (Chair's delegate), Del Da Costa (Friends' Secretary), Christine Callen and Cally Earnshaw (NAC) and Barry Langshaw as long-time Friend and guide. The awards will be presented at the End-of-Year event on 13 December.
- Seats and Picnic table settings – one of each recently sponsored.

6. **Treasurer's Report**

Lyn Rees, Treasurer, presented the Finance Report. As at 31 October, the Friends have a balance of \$89,069 in funds. Of this, \$49,016 is held in our transaction account and \$40,053 is held in a term deposit. Year-to-date, we have recorded a deficit of \$9,288 (compared to a surplus of \$28,913 at the end of October 2021). This deficit is due to the payment of \$25,304 for the printing of the 2nd edition of The Arboretum Book. The Friends-sponsored Forest Shelter has now been paid off; and the Ngala Bus lease quarterly expenditure is all budgeted.

Our proposed projects for future funding total \$117,853 to June 2025. These comprise future picnic settings and seats, monies held for STEP, balance of the 5-year annual lease of Ngala bus, Wollemi Pines Propagation project balance and the Arboretum Oral History Project.

Trust account – As at 31 October 2022, the National Arboretum Canberra Trust Fund had a balance of \$137,210 in total funds, with \$93,874 held in a savings account and \$43,336 held in a term deposit. Year-to-date, the Trust is showing a positive Net Cash Movement of \$19,683, compared to a surplus of \$25,032 as at 31 October 2021.

Lyn Rees moved and Del Da Costa seconded that the Treasurer's Report be accepted. Carried.

7. Volunteers & Guides Update

Christine Callen, Senior Director, Events and Community Engagement, had attended a recent Guides meeting where it was again noted that the Tracks & Trails are very boggy and extra care should be taken when leading walks. Another plea for more Ngala Bus Drivers, and bear in mind that Ngala Bus tours also take a Guide for interpretation so it is not a 'double role'.

- The Arboretum arranged for Floriade displays in the 'daleks' around the Kitchen/Discovery Garden.
- Some of the STEP pathways are still closed due to recent heavy rains.
- Thanks to the Harvest Group and Ange particularly for the Wollemi Pine project.
- In the Bonsai area, there are lovely spring items making a beautiful collection.
- In October alone, there were 943 volunteer hours, excluding admin tasks. Another amazing month!

8. Friends Reports

- Bonsai Report* – no report (Mike and Vicki Woolley on holiday).
- STEP* – Cathy Ikin reported that gum boots would have been a good purchase this year. All the native plants were flowering except peas. The Ephemeral Wetlands is currently a series of ponds with lots of frogs.
- Harvesting Group including Discovery Garden*
Colette and Ange had visited Yarralumla Nursery to check the growth of our Wollemi Pine seedlings – they are growing fast with all the recent rain. There are about 10 trees at least one metre tall!
- Working Bees Report* - no report (Mike and Vicki Woolley on holiday).

9. Friends Achievements

- Sales of The Arboretum Book are going well and we (via The Curatoreum) are selling about two cartons a month.
- Sales of Golden Wattle seeds are going well.
- Friends Arboretum calendar 2023 – sales going well but promotion still needed.
- Sales of Wollemi Pines are picking up a little and further promotion was foreshadowed, especially as they make great Christmas trees!

10. Other business

The next Market Stall is scheduled for Saturday 26 November.

11. Next Meeting – Tuesday 14 March 2023 at 5.30pm. A Seasonal Talk is being arranged for afterwards.

The General Meeting closed at 6.10pm and was followed by Guest Speaker Rachael Dawes, Senior Director, Urban Treescapes, ACT Government.