



Meeting of Council of the Friends of the ANBG

Tuesday 2 July 2013 at 1.30pm

Dickson Room, ANBG

Minutes

1. Opening and Apologies

Present: David Coutts (President), Dennis Ayliffe, Glenys Bishop, Anne Campbell, Jan Finley, Lesley Jackman, Marion Jones, Anne Phillips, Warwick Wright

Ex Officio: Peter Byron, Steve Speer

Apologies: John Connolly, Alan Munns, Barbara Podger, Judy West

2. Minutes Confirmation

Corrections:

5.1//5.2 Dot point #15: Julie Hendry (Nursery Staff) had taken part in a seed and cutting collection expedition to Hembry Station (not Tinderry Range)

5.16 Twenty two rather than 14 attended the Photography Group Meeting.

David Coutts agreed to do the revisions.

Motion: That the corrected minutes of the meeting held on 4th June 2013 be accepted.

Proposed: Dennis Ayliffe. **Seconded:** Lesley Jackman. **Carried.**

3. Matters Arising From Minutes

3.1 *Eucalypts and Dahl Trust*

An application for funding for a Eucalypt Exhibition in 2014 needs to be drawn up for submission to the Dahl Trust. Warwick Wright and Alan Munns were to progress this .

3.2 *Aboriginal Plant Trail Signs & Schools Photographic Exhibition Brochure*

The Aboriginal Plant Trail is currently on hold pending changes to the design and format of signs.

Action: Steve Speer to show Council the final version of the signs before manufacture.

The Schools Photographic Exhibition brochure front cover needs modernizing and is required for dispatch within the next two weeks (16th July). As the cost was thought to be small Council agreed to fund the new art work,

Action: Steve Speer to speak with Siobhan Duffy about redesigning the front cover of the brochure to advertise the Schools Photographic Exhibition.

3.3 *In Flower this Week*

This is proving too resource intensive for the Gardens relative to use. About 20-30 flyers are collected from the box on a weekly basis. It was suggested that this be trialled on a fortnightly basis and that the format be retained for the time being (including the map on the back). It would also be helpful if a marker could be placed at the relevant plant so that Barbara Daly would not have to accompany the Ranger to put out the numbered signs.

Action: In David Coutts absence, Steve Speer to discuss with Barbara Daly the proposed change from weekly to fortnightly of "In Flower this Week" with a relevant name change.

3.4 Library

The Environment Department's Central Library has closed and will only be available digitally. Catherine Jordan has now been transferred to ANBG Staff and her time will be devoted fully to the ANBG Library. Some supporting funds are being sought from the Department for purchase of books and periodicals. This is an area of potential support by the Friends.

3.5 Guides Conference 2017

Organization of this bi-annual conference of Guides of Botanic Gardens in Australia and NZ is rotated and it should be the turn of the ANBG Guides for the 2017 Conference. It was suggested that this be discussed with the Guides after the training for new guides has been completed. A decision is required to take to the Christchurch Conference later in 2013.

Action: Glenys Bishop to progress a decision with the Guides as to whether to offer to organize the 2017 Guides Conference.

4. General Business

4.1 AGM 2013

- A new date has been set (Thursday 10th October) in order to suit the Guest Speaker, Dr Andrew Young, Director, Centre for Australian National Biodiversity Research. This date also suits Dr Judy West. Alan Munns will also be available to accept an award of Life Membership of the Friends.
- Two positions which will fall vacant are for Treasurer and a Committee Member. Both current incumbents (respectively Marion Jones, Dennis Ayliffe) have indicated a willingness to re-nominate; Advice about the AGM and call for nominations will be included as an insert in the next edition of Fronds, which will be well in advance of the minimum notification time required.
- As the Dickson room is unavailable the Crosbie Morrison has been booked for the AGM.
- Some consideration about succession planning will be needed for the following AGM (2014) when all the other positions fall vacant (including President, Vice President, Secretary and remaining Committee Members).

Action: Advice about the AGM and call for nominations to be included as an insert into the next edition of Fronds
Action: Succession planning for Council membership is needed well in advance of AGM 2014, particularly for the Executive as most positions fall due.

4.2 Report of Discussion Group

This was attended by members and ex officio members of Friends Council assisted by Les Fielke on behalf of the membership team. It addressed a range of matters outside the scope of the regular monthly meetings. A summary of outcomes and attendant actions had been circulated.

Some key issues were:

- A volunteer co-ordinator be sought to overview all volunteers and their activities and keep a data base of same; this person would be able to direct people interested in volunteering to the appropriate groups. A role description is to be prepared in readiness for insertion into the December edition of Fronds.
- Membership of the Friends needs to be a condition of volunteering for Friends activities eg Guiding.
- Strong support for a young people's group but how to progress this requires some consideration eg a meeting with ANU Alpine Project Group Collaborators (Adrienne Nicotra).
- Use of broadcast email when necessary to provide updates between hard copy editions of Fronds.
- An annual budget to be prepared in order to better monitor performance and expenditure.
- Headline project(s) for the Public Fund be identified
- An updated Guidelines Manual to be prepared by a small group (Barbara Podger, Jan Finley, Alan Munns, David Coutts)
- The Strategic Plan to be revisited by Barbara Podger and Lesley Jackman for Council consideration in due course.
- A revision of the Constitution will be considered later (following the updated Guidelines Manual, and any changes to the MOU).

4.3 VIC Proposal

- Peter Byron announced that, due to severe financial constraints imposed by the 2013-2014 budget for the Department, it is necessary for the ANBG to find cost savings, preferably ones that do not impinge on core functions such as those associated with maintenance of the Living Collection. This has only become clear very recently. As a result, it is proposed to change the visitor reception function from paid staff to one staffed by volunteers (Friends). This approach has been adopted in other Botanic Gardens eg volunteers run the Kings Park Visitor Centre totally. The role will be primarily a "meet and greet function" with no bookings or phone answering duties. A manual (FAQ) will be available and the ANBG will manage the roster as well as training. Generally, there will be two sessions per day 10am to 12.30pm and 12.30pm to 3 pm.

- It is planned to begin this from mid-July with volunteers hopefully drawn initially from the Guides and subsequently from the wider Friends membership. A call for expressions of interest will be made by broadcast email and in the next edition of Fronds.
- It will also provide an opportunity to better develop and extend the Ranger role to more activities outside of the VIC.
- *Ad hoc* sampling of reactions from a few of the Friends membership has been mixed with some strongly supportive and others less so. Although not able to be present at this meeting, Barbara Podger, had expressed serious concern about the proposal, especially in relation to any negative impacts on staff members.
- The Executive of the Friends Council had met with ANBG Management prior to this meeting to be appraised of the situation.
- Council expressed its disappointment at the short notice given as the setting up of a volunteers' roster will take some considerable time.

Action: Glenys Bishop to send an email to all guides seeking expressions of interest in volunteering in the VIC.
Action: A call to all members of the Friends for expressions of interest in this role will also be included in the August edition of Fronds.

5. Reports

5.1/5.2 Executive Director & General Manager

Budget: The Environment Department's budget for 2013-2014 is very tight. Although ANBG has not fared as badly as other groups within the Department, it is necessary to save several hundred thousand dollars and to try to do this without losing resources (positions) to maintain the Living Collection. Capital funding has been approved for a range of works such as: new lower boardwalk in the Rainforest, irrigation controllers and hydraulic solenoids, new glasshouse benches (orchids), carpet replacement, vehicles (ute, Ranger electric vehicle), laboratory equipment (microscope, laminar flow cabinet), uninterrupted power supply (Botany Building), replacement server.

Red Centre Garden: Construction is due to finish in mid July. The artwork is nearly finished. The steel plates have been laid and the grouting applied. An over run of some \$16,000 is expected from the budget (\$100,000). This is due to unforeseen costs incurred because of the novelty of this approach eg erection of a tent over the slab to allow it to be heated to help the grouting to set; ring of steel around the outside of the artwork for greater stability; extra labour.

Pamille Berg, managing contractor for the art work, has said the artist (Teresa Pwerle) is concerned about reference to the art work at the centre of the Garden being called the Meeting Place, as this might be interpreted by Indigenous People as being a "traditional" meeting place. Thus it needs to be "badged" differently. Pamille plans to put an attribution near the central art work to explain the history of its development and acknowledge the funding from the ANBG Friends.

Resolution:

Friends Council resolved to approve up to \$16,000 in additional funding for their contribution to the Red Centre Garden central art work, bringing the total donation to \$116,000.

Staffing: Two horticultural staff are to be recruited to fill vacancies. The newly appointed plumber has resigned.

Other: The new Environment Minister is Hon Mark Butler. The outdoor pergola of the café will be demolished and replaced with louvres. The ANBG has been nominated for an ACT Tourism Award.

5.3 Friends Liaison

BRC Review: Bronwyn Copp, Ranger responsible, will present her review at a workshop for ANBG Staff on this on 10th July. Her final report will be presented to ANBG Management and Friends Council.

School holiday program: This starts on 8th July and includes a GPS session.

Guide Training: This starts on Thursday 4th July and runs on each following Thursday and Friday for 5 weeks.

Seasonal e-newsletter: The winter edition will be sent to the Friends List (70% of whom are on email). Those who wish to continue to receive it, will need to subscribe.

5.4 Treasurer

- The monthly financial statement had been circulated in advance.

Motion: That the monthly payments made be accepted.

Proposed: Marion Jones. **Seconded:** David Coutts. **Carried.**

- Council accepted the budget of income and expenditure for 2013-2014 financial year which the Treasurer had prepared, with reference to past financial statements.
- The Treasurer has assessed MYOB and recommended that it be trialled for six months (fee of \$280 for six months for Cloud computing access and \$40 monthly thereafter).

Resolution:

Friends Council resolved to approve payment for trialling of MYOB (\$280 for six months).

5.5 Secretary

Nothing to report. The Secretary will check emails remotely in his time away from Canberra. Lesley Jackson offered to check the Friends phone messages (which can also be done remotely).

5.6 Friends Group Reports

This will now focus only on Friends Sub-groups with matters to report.

5.6.1 Guides:

Conference: Nine guides have registered for the bi-annual Guides Conference in Christchurch, NZ at the end of October 2013. \$3,000 had been allocated for distribution to defray costs on a pro-rata basis. Glenys Bishop, Convenor, requested it be increased to \$3,400 so that one of the newly trained guides could attend.

Guide Training: 21 people are enrolled in the new intake for training.

Resolution:

Council resolved to approve additional funding of \$400 for attendance at the Guides Conference in NZ and also funding for shirts and badges for the new guides (up to 21) who pass the training course.

Red Centre Garden Handbook: This has been produced by Jane Keogh and Maureen Connolly from input received from various people (mainly guides). It will be made available to all Friends Guides. About 100 laminated covers are needed. Prior to copying, it is requested that it be shown to Craig Cosgrove and David Taylor.

Action: Provide costing for copying and laminating covers of the Red Centre Garden Handbook to Council for approval

Action: Prior to copying for distribution, show the final version of the Red Centre Garden Handbook to ANBG Staff (Craig Cosgrove, David Taylor)

VIC Reception Desk: Glenys noted that the Guides do have currently quite a lot of other commitments (eg helping with training) and so fewer may be able to help staff the Desk.

Labelling: Glenys noted that John Turnbull had advised that the sign for *Eucalyptus peltata* in the top car park should be changed to *Corymbia peltata*. Anne Philips suggested that Maria be told of this.

5.6.2 Social Events & Activities

- Organisation for Breakfast with the Birds is progressing.
- Major events planning committee meeting has been postponed until Friday 5th July.
- It is not yet clear whether there would be sufficient volunteers to run a Wine Table for the Bush Capital Weekend (particularly for the Dinner on Saturday 2nd November 2013). The liquor licensing has been tightened and it will be necessary for the Friends to operate under the Hellenic Club Licence instead of our own. Friends-around-the-Lake will be advised of the event.

5.6.3 Projects Subcommittee

Eight proposals have been received from ANBG and 1 from the Friends (David Coutts); a total of \$85,000 is being requested. A Project Subcommittee meeting will be held in mid to late September before the October Council meeting to review the proposals and make recommendations to Council.

5.6.4 Thursday Talks

On Thursday 1st August, as part of the Centenary Chats series, Dr Judy West will speak on "Science behind the

Gardens”.

5.6.5 Web site

The Home Page pictorials will be changed to *Banksias* as these are now flowering in winter.

5.6.6 Plant Science Group

A most successful meeting was held on 28th June of those who had expressed interest in joining a Plant Science Group. Minutes had been circulated in advance and will be posted to the Friends web site along with a new section about the Plant Science Group. Twenty two attended; of these 11 had previously expressed interest in participating and others were indirectly associated through participation in other activities. Two presentations were made by ANBG Staff - Bronwyn Copp on the Botanical Resource Centre and Tom North on the Seed Bank and Anna Monro spoke of the impending Stocktake as well as opportunities for Friends volunteers to help fill gaps in the ANBG's image collection. Afternoon tea provided an opportunity for people to mingle.

5.6.7 Membership Report

Total membership for June is 1377; 180 members have not yet renewed. Public Fund Receipt books were reprinted (2 per page) and the new coloured Parking Permits for 2014 are currently being printed. It is intended that each year will have a different and distinctive colour.

Next meeting:

This is scheduled for Tuesday 6th August but as quite a number of members will be away (including the President), it will remain for the Vice President to determine if there will be sufficient for a quorum.

The meeting was closed at 3.45 pm.

Minutes Approved by Council

6 August 2013