



28th ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

8 October 2015

ANBG Theatre

MINUTES

1. Opening and Welcome

The President, Dr Lesley Jackman, opened the meeting at 5.30 pm. Thirty seven members of the Friends signed the attendance sheet (Appendix A).

Also present were Dr Judy West, ANBG Executive Director, Mr Peter Byron, ANBG General Manager, Ms Sally Barnes, Director of National Parks.

2. Apologies

Lynden Ayliffe, Les Fielke, Lesley Kettle, Rana Munns, Barbara Scott, Sally Stephens, Barbara Tyler, Geoffrey White, Sally White.

3. Acceptance of minutes of 26th Annual General Meeting

Copies of the 26th AGM draft minutes were included on the Friends' website and distributed with the AGM agenda papers (Appendix B).

Motion: That the minutes of the 26th AGM held on 21 October 2014 be taken as read and accepted.
Proposed: Glenys Bishop. Seconded: Christianna Cobbold. **Motion Carried.**

4. President's Report

The President's report (Appendix C) covered the 12 month period from the last AGM. Highlights of the year were reported against the goals in the 2010-2015 Strategic Plan. Key future plans were noted. Some highlights included:

- *Public promotion and engagement:* The high attendance at the weekly Thursday talks; the success of events such as Breakfast with the Birds, the Summer Concerts and Enlighten; a Friends' Seed Bank volunteer ('Seedy Vols') received a highly commended award in the New Scientist Eureka Prize for Science Photography.
- *Partnership with the Gardens:* Input into the ANBG Master Plan, preparation for the 2016 Guides intake, future involvement of Plant Science Group members in ANBG research activities.
- *Raise Funds:* In partnership with the ANBG, generous corporate sponsorships by Goodwin and ACTEW Water were secured for the 2015 Summer Concerts; funding was provided for a number of ANBG projects including Rain Forest lighting, development of the *Asteraceae* Garden and a feasibility study for construction of a site specific commission by an artist or designer under the ANBG public Art Policy and Master Plan; Funding of Seed Bank equipment by the Public Fund.
- *Lively, stimulating, rewarding and dedicated Friends of the ANBG:* Parking arrangements were negotiated for Friends who volunteer; two successful events were held celebrating the Friends' 25th anniversary.

- *How we manage ourselves:* A comprehensive review of the Friends' 25 year old Constitution was undertaken and a new Constitution drafted; a financial management team was established to assist the Treasurer.
- *Looking ahead:* The Friends' five year Strategic Plan will be reviewed in 2016; the proposed tree house gazebo public art project will be progressed in conjunction with the Friends' Public Fund and the ANBG.
- *Attracting and retaining volunteers:* In 2015-16 Council will consider how best to support its dedicated group of volunteers and attract more Friends to volunteer so the effort is spread more widely.

Motion: That the President's Report for 2014-2015 be accepted.

Proposed: Jan Finley. Seconded: Alan Munns. **Motion carried.**

5. Treasurer's Report

The Treasurer, Marion Jones, in presenting her report (Appendix D), tabled the Friends' audited financial statements for the financial year ended 30 June 2015 (Appendix D1). The Friends had a strong year financially due to the steady increase in income from successful activities and events. It was noted that Council is confident the accounts are in a fit state to enable the Friends to meet their aims in the foreseeable future.

The audited financial statements of the Public Fund were also tabled (Appendix D2). Donations to the Public Fund were similar to the previous year, payments from the Fund comprised donations for Seed Bank equipment, with accumulated funds remaining steady compared to the previous year.

Motion: That the Treasurer's Report for the year ended 30 June 2015 be accepted.

Proposed: Warwick Wright. Seconded: John Fitz Gerald. **Motion Carried.**

6. Report by the Executive Director of ANBG

The ANBG Executive Director, Judy West, reported on ANBG activities involving the Friends and Garden developments, these included:

- The launch of the Master Plan.
- Capital works projects.
- Friends/Public Fund funded equipment and projects such as the Seed Bank counter and growth chamber, the Red Centre Garden way finder lighting, Aboriginal Plant Use Trail, the Rain Forest plant collection trip, the Public Art feasibility study and purchase of library books.
- The upgrade of the Monocotyledon section and the *Asteraceae* garden.
- Enriching the range of native species post opening of the Red Centre and *Asteraceae* gardens; conservation projects and Seed Bank research projects.
- Visitor numbers increased by 1% (at April 2015), however in the last three months numbers have increased 23,000 over the same period last year.

7. Election of Office Bearers and Council members

The President advised there were vacancies for the position of Treasurer and two general Council members. Nominations were received for the two general Council positions but not for the position of Treasurer. In the absence of a nomination for the position of Treasurer, Council proposed to co-opt Marion Jones to serve as Treasurer on an interim basis, while Council undertakes a search for a suitably qualified permanent appointee. This person would initially be co-opted as Treasurer for the

remainder of the 2015-16 year, with a view to his or her appointment being confirmed at the 2016 AGM.

The President handed over the election process to Judy West. Nominations and personal profiles lodged by the date set out in the meeting notice were tabled from Jeff Brown (a guide and Visitor Centre volunteer) and David Cox (Photographic Group member). As there were only two nominations to fill the two vacant positions, Judy West declared the two vacant positions filled by Jeff Brown and David Cox for two years in each case.

The President thanked retiring Council members Dennis Ayliffe and Ian Primrose for their service to the Friends.

8. Appointment of Auditor.

Motion: That the auditor, GLR Accountants, be reappointed for the 2014-2015 financial year. Proposed: Marion Jones. Seconded: David Coutts. **Motion Carried.**

9. Award of Life Membership

Life memberships of the Friends were awarded to Pat Wright and Warwick Wright in recognition of their dedicated service to the Friends and the ANBG.

David Coutts spoke in support of their award outlining Pat's and Warwick's involvement with the Friends and the ANBG. They joined the Friends in 1996 and have been voluntary guides, explainers and education rangers for much of that time. Amongst other things, they have been involved with guides' training, have provided active support for the Summer Concerts, participated at Australasian guides' conferences, guides' weekend away trips and initiated the new Friends' walks and organized a wattle exhibition.

Warwick established the Friends' Thursday Talks and was actively involved in the program from 2003-2013. He was also a member of Council for many years until 2014. He has been the Friends representative and more recently the Vice President of the Australian Association of Friends of Botanic Gardens since it was formally established in 2001. He will step down from their Committee in 2016.

In particular Pat and Warwick have made themselves available over many years for talks to interested community groups in Canberra and further afield. To date they have presented 115 talks (mainly given by Pat) to over 4800 people promoting the Gardens, the Friends and Australian native plants more generally. Their talks are entertaining and educational.

Pat and Warwick have made a unique contribution to the Friends and the ANBG and their award of life membership is admirable and well deserved.

The President presented Pat and Warwick each with Certificates of Life Membership and Barbara Podger presented them with native floral bouquets.

10. Special resolution to adopt the new Constitution

Friends' Vice President, Jan Finley, spoke to a Special Resolution to adopt a new Friends' Constitution. She discussed the background, the review and the consultation process involved in the drafting of the new Constitution (Appendix E). The work was undertaken by a Friends' Constitution Committee with requisite qualifications and experience.

The current Constitution was originally ratified at the first AGM of the Friends on 3 November 1991, prior to incorporation in March 1992. This is the first time the Constitution has been comprehensively reviewed since

that time. With the continuing growth and development of the Friends and the ANBG over a twenty-five year period this work was most timely and the need for a new Constitution essential.

The Committee was tasked to review the existing Constitution and draft a new Constitution that meets current and the future requirements of the Friends, covers all requirements that need to be included in a *Constitution* (in accordance with the *Associations Incorporation Act 1991*), and any regulations made under the Act, and the Memorandum of Understanding between the Director of National Parks and the Friends.

The proposed Constitution is comprehensive and includes practical guidance, is flexible, and expressed in clear and consistent English, is devoid of ambiguities, contradictions and duplications.

Consultation occurred with Council throughout the year, and with Friends from 4 July 2015 to 22 August 2015 via the Friends' website. All comments received during the consultation phase were comprehensively reviewed and answered.

Council endorsed the adoption of the draft Constitution dated 25 August 2015 at its 1 September 2015 meeting and recommended as a Special Resolution for ratification by the Friends at the 8 October AGM in accordance with sections 33 and 70 of the *Associations Incorporation Act*.

Motion: That the Friends of the Australian National Botanic Gardens Inc adopt by Special Resolution the revised draft Constitution dated 25 August 2015.

Proposed: Jan Finley. **Motion Carried:** By unanimous show of hands of all those members at the meeting and entitled to vote.

11. Other business

No additional business was raised.

12. Meeting closure

The meeting was closed at 6.25 pm.

Following the AGM, Sally Barnes, Director of National Parks, addressed Friends on the newly launched *ANBG Master Plan*.

Acceptance of Minutes at 28th AGM.

President of Friends of the ANBG

Appendices

- A Attendance Sheet Annual General Meeting 8 October 2015
- B Minutes of the 26th Annual General Meeting, 21 October 2014
- C President's Report 2015 AGM:
- D Treasurer's Report for the year ended 30 June 2015
- D1 Financial Statements for the year ended 30 June 2015, Friends of the ANBG Inc

- D2 Financial Statements for the year ended 30 June 2015, Friends of the ANBG Inc Public Fund
- E: Constitution Report for Friends of the Australian National Botanic Gardens AGM 8 October 2015