

**Meeting of Council
2 February 2016
Dickson Room**

Minutes

Attendance

Present: Lesley Jackman (Chair), Jan Finley, Rita Maclachlan, Marion Jones, Christianna Cobbold, David Cox, Sue Serjeantson, Barbara Tyler.
Ex officio: David Coutts, Peter Byron, Rosella Hampshire, Steve Speer.
Co-opted: Alan Munns, Barbara Podger.
Invited: Helen Elliot, Cecilia Milano.
Apologies: Glenys Bishop
Non attendance: Jeff Brown

1. Opening

The meeting was opened by the Friends' President, Lesley Jackman, at 2.30 PM.

2. Minutes of Council Meeting 1 December 2016

No amendments were made to the minutes, they were taken as read and accepted.

Resolution: Council accepts the minutes of the 1 December 2016 meeting.

Proposed: Christianna Cobbold *Seconded:* Barbara Tyler **Carried.**

3. Matters arising from Minutes of Month 2016 Meeting

- The ANBG's Green Army application was not successful.
- A second EFTPOS machine has been purchased for Friends activities.

4. General Business

4.1 Australian Association of Friends of Botanic Gardens (AAFBG) and financial arrangements for conference attendance by Friends of the ANBG

- Dennis Ayliffe has agreed to nominate as the Friends' AAFBG representative on the AAFBG governing body, the Committee of Management, at its forth coming AGM; it will be held at the time of the biennial AAFBG Conference in Geelong. Council agreed to fund his early bird conference registration fee of \$230 and also to provide support for cost of petrol for car travel. The Committee of Management has two face to face meetings a year and holds teleconferences as required.
- At the October 2015 Council meeting, it was agreed to develop a policy on Friends' support of volunteers at conferences, in the interests of a consistent approach across the various Friends groups. Recent conference support has been for early bird registration within a financial ceiling, for professional development, the biennial guides conferences and more recently for up to two people at the forthcoming National Seed Science Forum.
- Glenys Bishop has negotiated with the AAFBG conference organisers to attend in part to promote the 2017 guides conference. Lesey Jackman is planning to attend to understand more about the operation of the association.
- Council endorsed the development of a policy on financial assistance for Friends attendance at meetings where they have a representational role and/or at conferences/seminars/meetings for professional development.

4.2 Public Art Treehouse Gazebo

4.2.1 EOI

- Thirty six artists or designer/makers responded to the Treehouse EOI, thirty four of which are conforming submissions. The Friends Advisory Group will meet on 4 and 5 February with the project consultants, Pamille Berg and Jon Burchill, to consider the conforming submissions.

4.2.2 Membership of Friends Advisory Group

- Council agreed to Marion Jones continuing as a member of the Friends Advisory Group based upon her long term involvement in the project. Helen Elliot, the Friends new Treasurer will also now be a member of the group.

4.2.3 Public art fundraising policy framework

- The President sought comment from Council on a draft policy framework for the Treehouse Gazebo Project. The draft policy covers tax deductibility and forms of acknowledgement for donations made through the Public Fund (generally), donations channelled through the Public Fund and Corporate sponsorship for the project.

4.3 Friends' Database

- A draft data base needs document was tabled for comment. It covers donations to the public art project, membership, conference management and the volunteering strategy. Les Fielke will advise whether the current data base, developed for membership purposes, can be adapted for future needs. The President will contact counterparts of Friends' groups at other national institutions to discuss database systems used by them.

4.4 Friends' Strategic Plan 2016-20

- Friends Vice President, Jan Finley, provided an update on the review of the Friends' Strategic Plan 2016-20. An initial assessment has been undertaken, the content is mainly current but needs restructuring and re-organising. In the first instance the framework needs work to make sure the Vision, Mission, Goals and Objectives are succinct and 'memorable'. Once these issues are addressed and approved by Council, work will begin on reviewing strategies and assessing whether new strategies need to be added.
- A SWOT Analyses (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats Analyses) will be further progressed for the March Council Meeting. Over the next month Jan and David Cox will develop material for Council consultation. Broad Friends consultation will occur after Council endorsement of the final draft document.

4.5 Governance issues

- Council noted a status report of updating and development of new Friends' policies and procedures.

4.6 Public Fund – Management Committee appointments

- The Public Fund Management Committee terms of appointment end in May 2016. Council agreed it is timely to review the mix of skills and experience needed to provide expert management and also to stagger the terms of appointments.
- The Friends' President (Lesley Jackman), the chair of Management Committee (Barbara Podger) and Friends Past President (David Coutts) will discuss the current and future operation of the Public Fund with a report back to the March Council meeting .

5. Reports

5.1 ANBG General Manager

- Staff movements include Dr Judy West's return on a 12 month contract as Executive Director from 31 March, Peter Byron will act in the position for 6 weeks pending her return. Annalisa Millar is leaving the ANBG to take up a position at the National Museum, she has made an important contribution whilst at the ANBG.
- The ANBG Master Plan construction program is progressing – an EOI for the Conservatory architects is going to a select tender process, consideration is being given to a design competition for the Horticultural Depot. A Request for Offer has been sent to three trail building companies for construction of the ANBG's section of the Bushland Precinct walking trail to the Arboretum; a proposal has been lodged with ACT Tourism for matching funds for the Garden's section of the trail.
- In response to concerns raised about the deteriorating condition of seats and curtains in the Flora Explorer vehicle, Peter Byron advised that new blinds will be made of weather proof material; he undertook to look into the condition of seats. He also advised the ANBG is not in a position to provide undercover garaging for the vehicle.

5.2 ANBG Friends' Liaison

- An EOI has been put out seeking proposals from event organisers to conduct commercial events and public programs in the Gardens. These may include outdoor theatre and cinema, markets, concerts, children's events, school holiday programs, trade shows, special themed events.
- The launch of the Aboriginal Plant Trail went well and was well publicised.
- The Bee Hotel will be launched on 11 February by the Secretary of the Department of the Environment.
- Operationally, the Summer Concerts are running smoothly.
- Delicious After Dark has been booked almost to capacity.
- The Gardens visitor survey is ongoing.
- Advertisements for a full time ranger position and educational explainers will be advertised next week.

5.3 Treasurer

5.3.1 Financial Report

- Marion Jones presented the December 2015 and January 2016 financial statements of receipts and outgoings and the half year (to December 2015) income and expenditure statement and balance sheet.
- The Friends' auditors have advised that the initial set up cost for MYOB accounting software will be of the order of \$300 - \$500 and a monthly subscription will cost \$30. It is proposed to commence on 1 July. The use of MYOB software for Friends' financial management was supported by Council.
- Lisa Wilmot will retire from her role on the Friends financial team from mid March. The new Treasurer will assess the need for a replacement after familiarising herself with the role.

Resolution:

1. Council accepts the Friends' financial statements for December 2015 and January 2016 and the half year income and expenditure statement and balance sheet to December 31 2015.
2. Council supports the use of MYOB accounting software for Friends' financial management and agrees to the set up cost (in the order of \$300 to \$500) and an ongoing monthly cost of \$30

Proposed: Christianna Cobbold *Seconded:* Rita Maclachlan *Carried*

5.3.2 Resolution to appoint a new Friends' Treasurer

- Council accepts the resignation of Marion Jones as Treasurer of the Friends.
- The President thanked Marion Jones for her contribution as Friends' Treasurer for the past 6-7 years. Marion has offered to provide a backup role for the financial team.
- The President introduced Helen Elliot who has agreed to take on the position. Helen's background includes being chief accountant for a large national organisation and running her own accounting business. She has been a Friend of the ANBG for a number of years and volunteered at special events, she is the Treasurer and past President of the Australian Garden History Society.

Resolution:

1. Council accepts the resignation of Marion Jones as Treasurer of the Friends.
1. Council records its appreciation of her contribution in the role for over six years.
2. Council appoints Helen Elliot as the new Treasurer of the Friends of the ANBG until the 2016 Annual General Meeting.

5.4 Friends' Group Reports

5.4.1 Fronds team arrangements

- The *Fronds* Committee of Margaret Clarke, Barbara Podger and Anne Rawson have advised their intention to step down after the publication of the April 2016 newsletter. They believe it is time for some new people, new ideas and new enthusiasm. Anne has been on the committee since 2005 and Barbara and Margaret since 2008. They have offered to assist their replacements as required. The skills needed are in graphic design, editing, liaison with the printer and knowledge of what is happening in the Gardens and the Friends.
- Council agreed to seek expressions of interest from Friends in a broadcast email.

- Council endorsed a warm vote of thanks to the *Fronds* team for their commitment to producing an engaging, informative and high quality newsletter over a long period.

5.4.2 Projects Committee

5.4.2.1 Report

- Council noted a progress report on the following matters: acknowledgement of Friends support for projects in the ANBG, the replacement and upgrade of computers in the Botanical Resource Centre, Environmental Monitoring System malfunction and repair options and a Roger Good Memorial. It is anticipated recommendations on these issues will be provided to the March Council meeting.
- Council members were asked to provide feedback to David Coutts on the Project Committee's view on forms of acknowledgment of Friends support for ANBG projects (refer to Appendix to paper).

5.4.2.2 Bushland Precinct Report

- The report provided an update on Friends' possible involvement in the proposed track linking the ANBG with the Arboretum. Activities identified include:
 - identification of the flora in the vicinity (Plant Science Group);
 - securing seed and plants from the *Grevillea ramissima* population next season (Plant Science Group, Growing Friends, Seedy Volunteers);
 - An orchid survey proposed for March, possibly with assistance of volunteers (a list has been put together);
 - An entomology survey with advice being sought from Roger Farrow and Ted Edwards (both Friends).
- It is proposed to develop one or two posters about the Precinct plans in the Friends of Black Mountain exhibition, opening in the VIC on 19 February. There may be a small cost for the design of the posters.

5.4.3 Ex situ Project Report – progress report

- Progress made includes assembling a group about 20 EPBC listed species. The list may change depending on opportunities that arise through the ANBG's partnerships with other organisations and due to considerations of seasonality for surveys/seed collection. It was anticipated that in early 2015 discussions would be held with other Parks Australia staff and with NSW Threatened Species officers regarding the selection of priority species for conservation actions. This would generate a short list and as information is accrued regarding the seed collections held in other institutions such as the Melbourne and Sydney Botanic Gardens, a field work program will be developed that is complimentary to existing ex situ collections for species/populations in NSW and Victoria.
- Once the program is developed, the ANBG will develop a funding proposal for the Council's consideration.

5.4.4 Schools Photo Competition

- Cecilia Melano, convenor of the Schools Photographic Exhibition, provided historical data on participation of ACT high schools and colleges in the Friends' Schools Photographic Exhibition. Information included the number of entries and the participating schools for each year since the competition's inception in 1997. The number of schools entering each year has been consistently low (varying from one to eight) and has not changed in 19 years. There has been little change in overall prize money over the period. It was noted that photography is a single semester elective subject and student participation in the competition is teacher-dependent.
- David Cox, convenor of the Friends' Photographic Group noted there has been difficulty with the definitions of categories keeping up with technological changes over time. He suggested consideration be given to opening participation to any schools that have taken images in the Gardens, have a peoples' choice award, increase publicity (beyond contacting individual schools), review categories, review whether prize money be given to students or to schools.
- Council affirmed it was interested in the objective to attract students into the Gardens and requested Cecilia Melano and David Cox to develop an options paper for continuing or ceasing the Schools' Photographic Competition for the March 2016 Council meeting.

5.4.5 Guides

- Council approved approximately \$300 for the cost of 100 lanyards to hold volunteer guides' name tags.

Resolution:

Council approves approximately \$300 for the cost of 100 lanyards to hold volunteer guides' name tags.

Proposed: Jan Finley *Seconded:* Rita Maclachlan *Carried*

5.4.6 2017 Guides Conference

- The update report included new organising committee arrangements and that a preliminary budget has been discussed with Marion Jones and Helen Elliot.
- Some payments required in the next few months include a \$400 deposit for the venue of the Conference dinner, \$60 for advertising the conference at the AAFBG Conference, \$1700 deposit for buses, and a deposit for the Shine Dome caterer.
- Council agreed payment of \$400 for a non-refundable deposit to University House to secure the Great Hall for the conference dinner and \$60 for an advertising display at the AAFBG conference.

Resolution:

Council approves payment of \$400 for the deposit to University House to secure the Great Hall for the 2017 Guides Conference dinner and \$60 for advertising material for the AAFBG Conference.

Proposed: Christianna Cobbold *Seconded:* Sue Serjeantson *Carried*

5.4.7 Botanic Art Group (BAG) Exhibition

- The opening of the BAG Exhibition will be on 18 March and the Friends will provide drinks for the occasion.

5.4.8 Membership

- January numbers are 1935 members, 242 lapsed members. These are comparable to the same period in 2015.

5.4.9 Secretary

- The Friends 2015 Annual Information Statement to the Australian Charities and Not-for-Profits Commission (ACNC) was lodged and accepted. The Friends' new Constitution and the 2014-2015 annual financial statements of the Friends and the Public Fund were included in the Friends record.

5.4.10 Thursday Talks

- Attendance figures at the 2015 Thursday Talks were 3047 and donations amounted to \$4869. The attendance number is similar to that for 2014 and 555 more than 2013.

6. Date and place of next meeting: Tuesday 1 March 2016, 2.30pm in the Banks Building.

The meeting closed at 4.45 PM.

Lesley Jackman
President.