

Friends of the Australian National Botanic Gardens Inc
Minutes of Eighteenth Annual General Meeting

held on Tuesday 13 February 2007 at 5.30pm in the ANBG Theatrette

1. Opening and Welcome. The President, Andrew Walker, declared the meeting open and welcomed all sixty members present. He thanked Dorothy Mellowship for acting as Secretary for the meeting.

2. Apologies were received from Cath Busby, John Connolly, Maureen Connolly, June Foster, Shirley McKeown, Louise Muir, Alan Munns, Rana Munns, Andy Rawlinson..

3. Confirmation of Minutes. Minutes of the 17th Annual General Meeting of 14 February 2006 were confirmed (moved John Burdett, seconded Barbara Podger, carried).

4. President's Report. Andrew Walker spoke to his circulated written report. He said that the past year had been another good one for the Friends. Membership had grown, as had the number of people attending Friends' events. A number of new volunteers had come forward to help, especially new 'bucketeers' for the summer concerts. The volunteer guides now provide three walks a day for seven months of the year and two walks a day for the other months. Andrew thanked Bruce Chapman, who recently stepped down after many years service as convener of the guides' monthly meetings. Don Beer has taken over the task. Two of the most respected guides, Bernard Fennessy and Tom Green, died during the year and Andrew paid tribute to them both. To commemorate Bernard's long commitment to the Friends and the Gardens an annual 'Bernard Fennessy *What's in a Name* award' had been established.

Andrew spoke of improvements to the Newsletter during the year, largely due to the ideas and considerable efforts of Elizabeth Bilney and Anne Rawson. Elizabeth has now stepped down from the Newsletter Committee and Andrew thanked her for her many years of efficient service. The Growing Friends flourished during the past year and, despite the drought, were able to hold two successful plant sales. Malcolm Fyfe had stepped down as Growing Friends contact officer and Kath Holtzapffel had taken on the task. The Botanic Art Group, under the capable leadership of Robin McKeown, had continued to grow and has expanded into two sub-groups.

Andrew referred to the large and diverse range of Friends' events throughout the year. He thanked Warwick Wright for his leadership of the activities subcommittee and Louise Muir for her leadership of the social events subcommittee.

This year the Friends funded the Cascade project alongside the Visitor Centre. As mentioned at last AGM, the Friends have decided to change the funds allocation system from \$20,000 a year to \$90,000 to \$100,000 over three years. It is hoped that details of the first project under the new triennial system will be announced soon.

Andrew noted a number of staff changes at the Gardens during the year, including the departure of Robin Nielsen as Director. Andrew extended the Friends' best wishes to Robin and welcomed Anne Duncan to the Director's position. Andrew said that this would be his last report as President because he had come to the end of the maximum four year term allowed for a person to occupy the position. He thanked Gardens' staff and Council members for the support given to him over those years.

Life membership: Andrew said he was delighted, as his last official duty, to present a Life Membership plaque and a Gold Parking Permit to Alison McKenzie recognising her "exceptional service to ANBG Friends from 1990 to 2007". He said that Alison is the epitome of an excellent volunteer worker. Alison replied that it had been a privilege, sheer pleasure and soul restoring being involved with the ANBG and that the Gardens are a fantastic resource.

Andrew moved that his report be received, seconded by Warwick Wright. Carried

5. Treasurer's Report. The Treasurer, Beverley Fisher, presented the audited Financial Statement for the year ended 30 September 2006. The funds are in a healthy position. Total funds amount to \$182,331. There are two term deposits held at the NAB; one is currently \$138,264 and the other is \$25,555. Income for the year was almost \$20,000 less than the previous year, largely due to the fact that the annual 'Grazing Dinner' was not held in the 2005/06 year. Also, less interest was received, although that simply reflects the duration of the term deposit which will cross to the following financial year. Having regard to those factors, income for 2005/06 is largely on par with 2004/05. Expenditure on Garden support increased by \$3,000 to \$25,508. This included \$20,000 for the

'Cascades' project, \$3,000 for a study of 'Snakes in the ANBG', \$1,500 sponsorship of BGANZ and \$1,008 for book vouchers for interns.

The other significant expense was \$8,459 to the Public Fund to supplement the cost of the Shelter project. The Public Fund had received 101 individual donations since it was established in June 2004 which amount to \$65,774. Bev encouraged members to make tax deductible donations of \$2 or more to keep the Fund moving forward.

Income from Summer Concerts and wine table held up well at \$20,500 and the efforts of members to ensure this major source of income continues is greatly appreciated. There was only one plant sale for the year, returning approximately \$4,000. Income from donations at regular talks organised by the Activities Committee amounted to \$1,716.

Warwick Wright moved the report be received, seconded Kath Holtzapffel, carried.

6. Director's Report. The Director of the ANBG, Anne Duncan, said that the last year had been a time of great change, with a new Director and many staff changes. The next two months will see a focus on budget and business planning. A process for developing a twenty year vision for the Gardens will commence; staff and the Friends will be involved, as well as national level stakeholders to ensure the Gardens' vision is truly national. That strategic vision will be used to inform the management plan review due in 2008 and hopefully also a master site plan and interpretation plan.

Big issues on the agenda are still climate change and water. The Gardens is facilitating a national approach by all botanic gardens to climate change adaptation. A long term water management strategy is being developed. Internal structures and processes will be reviewed to ensure, in these lean budget times, that the Gardens is as efficient and effective as possible.

Significant achievements for Public Programs have included completion of a marketing plan and style guide. Venue operations have been rationalized and streamlined, leading to increased revenue. Two popular exhibitions, *Flora Tasmania* and *Bare Winter*, contributed to a significant increase in visitor numbers. The summer concerts and Snakes Alive were well organised and ran smoothly, attracting record numbers.

A new Central Irrigation System has been installed. Irrigation reports can now be generated, with the system providing a lot of useful information. Work on the Tasmanian culvert means that rainforest gully runoff now flows into the Tasmanian pond. During the summer months this has been used to irrigate the Tasmanian gardens, education and Kiosk lawns as well as other nearby gardens. During the year the Visitor Information Centre and Ellis Rowan Building, including the Friends' Lounge, were refurbished. Thought is being given to a design competition for the old nursery site.

Anne concluded by thanking ANBG Staff and Andrew Walker and the Friends for support over the past year.

Moved Malcolm Fyfe, seconded Doreen Wilson that the report be accepted. Carried.

7. Election of Office-bearers and Council Members. Anne Duncan chaired this segment. There were seven positions vacant on the Council. Nominations were received from:

President:	Alan Munns
Vice-President:	Barbara Podger
Secretary:	David Coutts
Council Members (4 positions):	John Connolly, David Mellowship, Andrew Walker, Warwick Wright

As there were no further nominations, Anne declared these seven elected.

8. Appointment of Auditors. Gorrell Long Robertson were reappointed auditors for 2006-2007: moved by Warwick Wright, seconded Kath Holtzapffel. Carried

9. General Business. David Mellowship spoke to his paper regarding Council's decision to raise Membership Fees for the membership year beginning September 2007.

Andrew Walker expressed his appreciation to Shirley McKeown for her contribution to Council.

The meeting closed at 6.30 pm and was followed by a talk by the Director, Anne Duncan, entitled *A Framework for a Shared Vision*.