

**Friends of the Australian National Botanic Gardens
Council Meeting 14 April 2022**

Item	Topic	Information	Moved (M) Seconded (S)	Council
1	Approval of Agenda, Attendance & Apologies			
1.1	Agenda	Neville Page opened the meeting and sought any additions/changes to the agenda. The agenda was accepted with minor changes.		Passed
1.2	Attendance and Apologies	Present <u>Council</u> : Neville Page (President, Chair), Linda Beveridge (Vice President), Anne Holmes (Treasurer), Wanda Filsell, Kerry Moir, David More <u>Ex officio</u> : Peter Byron, Megan Menz <u>Invited</u> : Barbara Podger <u>Apologies</u> : Lynden Ayliffe, Christianna Cobbold, Alan Henderson, Lesley King, Judy West		Noted
2	Minutes of Previous Meeting	RESOLUTION: that the minutes of the Council meeting of 10 March 2022 be accepted.	M: Linda Beveridge S: Wanda Filsell	Passed
3	Matters arising from previous minutes	None		
4	General Business			
4.1	Membership fees and benefits	David More referred to the paper on Google drive. Various members expressed thanks to the team for all the work put into developing the paper. Neville Page expressed caution about moving away from a fixed membership year. David said he wanted to identify it as an issue but thought spreading renewals over a few weeks a better option. Linda Beveridge said some organisations she knew had moved back		Noted

		<p>from rolling memberships to a fixed system. Council generally felt that the types of membership should be as simple as possible, that the current system was overly generous towards Households and that an increase in fees was reasonable. David will do further work on the categories and fees. He stressed the need for flexibility since each software trial to date has thrown up a slightly different mix of possibilities and constraints.</p> <p>ACTION: The IT and Membership Team to prepare a further report for consideration at the next Council meeting.</p>		
4.2	Communications Strategy	<p>Kerry Moir referred to the paper on Google drive summarising the key findings from the questionnaire given to new Members at the March <i>Meet and Greet</i>. Of the 85% of members who responded, 71% provided personal information and some indicated a willingness to assist with tasks such as IT and the Website. Many wished to join Special Interest Groups (SIGs). Feedback had been passed to the relevant groups. There was discussion about the merits of doing surveys, how the information gathered from the questionnaire and a wider survey could be handled, and the possible impact of increased interest on the SIGs.</p> <p>RESOLUTION: That Council send an email to all new members responding to queries and interests identified through the questionnaire, ie providing information about how to join the SIGs and a link to information on the ANBG website about its volunteer programs.</p> <p>RESOLUTION: That Council suggest to the Growing Friends, the Photographic Group, and the Botanic Art Groups that they consider holding a come and try, or similar, session for new members.</p> <p>ACTION: That the Communications Working Group develop an implementation plan for a further survey of Friends.</p>	<p>M: Kerry Moir S: David More</p> <p>M: Kerry Moir S: David More</p>	<p>Passed</p> <p>Passed</p>
4.3	Australian Association of Friends of Botanic Gardens (AAFBG)	<p>Neville Page said the AAFBG used to have 3-monthly meetings. Recently, this had changed to almost monthly to deal with issues relating to the Administrative Officer who has now resigned. The AAFBG is now looking at restructuring. Neville said that</p>		Noted

		Linda Beveridge would be attending the biennial conference in April/May at Eurobodalla Regional Botanic Gardens and would be our voting member at the AGM on 1 May.		
5	Reports			
5.1 and 5.2	ANBG Executive Officer and General Manager	<p>In Judy West's absence, Peter Byron reported that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● the new Management Plan was signed off by the Minister last week but must sit for 15 days in Parliament before release ● the Friends' Lawn is very well patronised especially by those with children, and the Café has received positive feedback from patrons ● the new pathway/intersection works at the end of the Ellis Rowan Building have just been completed ● the tender for the new Seed Bank and Horticultural Centre should be out in late May, hopefully works will start in September and be completed by December 2023 ● the Conservatory is about 30% completed ● the tender for the Café will go out within the next few months ● goats are back eating weeds at the top of the Gardens ● Lynden Ayliffe – a keen participant of the Weedy Volunteers – was writing a piece for the next e-bulletin encouraging people to join the Weedy Volunteers ● the hail damaged roof of the Ellis Rowan Building will be replaced soon and after that the Visitor Centre roof. <p>Neville Page said a picture from the recent photograph exhibition had been selected for presentation by the Friends to the Gardens. He then formally presented the photograph <i>Flannel Flowers</i> to Peter Byron.</p>		Noted
5.3	ANBG Friends Liaison	<p>Megan Menz reported that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● there were 42,823 visitors to the Gardens in March with 7,523 entering the Visitor Centre – on par with the five year average ● events happening across April and early May include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ storytime on the first Friday of every month ▪ as part of the Canberra & Region Heritage Festival, Indigenous Plant Use Walks will be held for the next three consecutive Wednesdays ▪ the Gardens will come alive with the sound of music with 'Tree of Life' as part of the Canberra International Music Festival on Friday 29 April 		Noted

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ a range of kid's events, Flora Explorer tours and an outdoor exhibition will be held as part of Canberra Tree Week from 30 April- 8 May ● the exhibition on now until 8 May in the Visitor Centre is '<i>Growing in the Gardens</i>' by members of the Friends of the ANBG Botanic Art Group ● schools are slowly returning with 17 schools visiting in March, bringing 801 students to visit the Gardens which is 37% lower than the March 5 year average. Excursions are still being discouraged by public education departments, including NSW and ACT, as a result all groups visiting are independent schools or non-school groups like guides or universities. The majority – 681 students - were from interstate, 120 were from local schools. April has lower school bookings due to Easter and school holidays; we are currently expecting 336 students to visit next month ● as at the end of March, the ANBG has 17,982 Facebook followers with a post reach for March of 107.2K, 2,880 Instagram followers, and 4,210 Twitter followers. 		
5.4	President's Report	Neville Page said his activities were outlined in his report on Google drive. A member had also asked if we could publicise the issue of Blewitt's Block – an unspoilt grassy woodland area threatened by urban development. Since this was compatible with the Friends' objectives, it was agreed that Neville would write a piece for the next e-bulletin.		Noted
5.5	Treasurer's Report	Anne Holmes said the report prepared by Helen Elliot was on Google Drive. She said that income was still coming in from new memberships, and the main expense had been printing and mail out of the April <i>Fronds</i> . Two term deposits mature in May but can be discussed at the May Council meeting. RESOLUTION: That the Treasurer's Report for March 2022 be accepted.	M: Anne Holmes S: Linda Beveridge	Passed
5.6	IT Report	David More said he was looking at redeveloping the website and the membership database into one system. Technical support was the critical issue and he was still trying to identify candidates. Neville Page said he had contacted the Secretary of the Friends of the Arboretum and they were currently looking at reviewing their website and membership database. David will contact the Arboretum. David said he needs to work out the structure of our project and then translate it into an action plan. Neville suggested getting a working group together once David was ready to move ahead.		Noted

5.7	Project Committee	<p>Megan Menz referred to the spreadsheet on Google drive. In addition to the completed works already mentioned by Peter Byron, the Metallic Green Carpenter Bee signage was in place and a meeting with the consultant on the Visitor Centre exhibition design was scheduled for 29 April. In relation to Public Fund projects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● other funding had been found for the <i>on-line education resource</i> project this year so the \$50,000 would be needed next year instead ● funding for the <i>How do I survive in the Red Centre</i> project (\$10,000) would be needed in 2022/23, not this financial year ● the <i>Seed Production Area</i> (s189c) project will not be progressing so another project will be put forward. <p>Judy West will report at the next meeting about the annual research scholarship (funded by both Council and the Public Fund).</p>		Noted
5.8	Public Fund	<p>Neville Page said that the Management Committee had not met since February. He would arrange a meeting to discuss the <i>on-line education resources</i> and <i>How do I survive in the Red Centre</i> projects.</p> <p>With the latter project moved to 2022-23, Kerry Moir thought it more likely that a Friends' representative could be found among the guides.</p>		Noted
5.9	Friends Reports	<p>a. Photographic Group – nothing to report.</p> <p>b. Botanic Art Group – Linda Beveridge reported that sales to date for the <i>Growing in the Gardens</i> exhibition were over \$9,000. Neville Page said that a painting had been selected for the Friends to give the ANBG.</p> <p>c. Flowers, Fruit and Foliage (FFF) – the walk and leaflet are still produced but the video is on hold.</p> <p>d. Growing Friends (GF) – Wanda Filsell said several new members had come to the April meeting, and consideration was being given to ways to keep all members engaged. Council and people associated with the ANBG could buy plants at the igloo on Tuesday mornings.</p> <p>e. Plant Science Group – Linda said the first Talk on 11 April was well received and had around 35 attendees. The broken microscope in the BRC is being replaced and, since water leaks had damaged books, it was good that the roof of the Ellis Rowan Building was being replaced soon.</p> <p>f. Thursday Talks – Linda said that the Talks were going well though numbers were down (43-45 people) compared to pre-COVID times (around 73). She will come back to Council about recording the Talks.</p>		<p>Noted</p> <p>Noted</p> <p>Noted</p> <p>Noted</p> <p>Noted</p>

		<p>g. Social Events – two walks are planned but details are not yet available.</p> <p>h. Nature Journaling – Neville Page said that sessions are going well. A short talk is planned at the start of the next session.</p> <p>i. Membership and Meet and Greet – the Membership report is on Google drive. Neville said the March <i>Meet and Greet</i> event for new Members was a great success. Linda will provide a report in due course.</p>		Noted Noted Noted
5.10	Volunteer Guides	A report from Lesley King was on Google drive. She will update Council on a number of matters at the next meeting.		Noted
5.11	Communications	<p><i>Fronds</i> – Barbara Podger referred to her report on Google drive which canvassed the need to replace Pam Rooney who has retired. She suggested advertising for a person in the next e-bulletin and Council agreed.</p> <p>Broadcast email – copy to Wanda Filsell by COB 20 April 2022.</p>		Noted
6	Other Business			
6.1	Launch of the Friends' Lawn	Neville Page said that 42 people had been invited to attend the launch on Wednesday 27 April. This included Council members, SIG convenors and the Public Fund Management Committee.		Noted
6.2	Grant application for Mega Fauna Event	<p>Neville Page said the ANBG had applied for an ACT Government grant to fund the hire of roving large-scale puppets for this year's Mega Fauna event. After being advised that the ANBG was not eligible, Council had agreed in March to apply instead. Barbara Podger asked about Friends' involvement and it was suggested that perhaps a special event could be arranged.</p> <p>ACTION: Neville Page to work with Megan Donaldson on the grant application.</p>		Noted
7	Next Meeting	2pm, on Thursday 12 May 2022 (venue to be advised)		

