



Meeting of Council of the Friends of the ANBG

Tuesday 2 April 2013 at 1.30pm

Dickson Room, ANBG

Minutes

Attendance

Present David Coutts (President), Barbara Podger, John Connolly, Marion Jones, Dennis Ayliffe, Glenys Bishop, Anne Campbell.

Ex officio: Peter Byron: Steve Speer, Jan Finley.

Apologies Lesley Jackman, Warwick Wright, Judy West, Anne Phillips, Alan Munns.

1. The meeting was opened by the President, David Coutts at 1:30 PM

2. Minutes Confirmation

- The minutes of the meeting held on 5th March 2013 were accepted on the motion of Anne Campbell, seconded by David Coutts

3. Matters Arising From Minutes

3.1 *Eucalypt Walk opening*

- The last interpretive sign will be installed next week
- The launch date has been set for May 17th.
- The opening will probably be held on the Eucalypt lawn with the Friends providing a light morning tea. (Crosbie Morrison room back-up?)
- Approval was given for expenditure up to \$300 for refreshments for the launch of the Eucalypt Walk on May 17th.
- Prof. David Lindenmayer may be able to open the walk, depending on when he returns from overseas. Sabrina Sonntag will compile the invitation list with input from the Friends.
- Representatives of the Dahl Trust and also the Public Fund should be invited.

4. General Business

4.1 *Orchids*

- David Coutts had a long talk with David Taylor on the issues.
- Peter Byron said that Mark Clements had been rearranging and moving plants between the glasshouses, with the assistance of some of the volunteers.
- The Orchid Volunteers would take a greater role in looking after the display with nursery staff tending to the hardware such as the environment control system.
- A more extensive regime of pest control will be trialled.
- A meeting of volunteers will be set up and David Coutts will sit in on it.
- More volunteers will be sought and linkage to the Growing Friends is to be looked at .
- The group will become a sub-committee of the Friends.

4.2 *Plant Stocktake*

- 8 volunteers had come forward and Paul Carmen considers this sufficient for the moment.
- The work will start in May

4.3 *Summer Sounds 2014 Sponsorship*

- The report on the 2013 Summer Sounds Concerts was ready.
- Blackshaws have withdrawn as sponsors
- Suggestion for possible new sponsors included
 - Union Offset (Friends spend ~\$10,000 per year.)
 - ACT Tourism
 - Hyatt Hotel

- Other Real Estate Agents
- The Convention Bureau may be interested in finding sponsors
- 4.4 *Eucalypt Exhibition and Dahl Trust application.*
 - Steve Speer and Warwick Wright were to liaise on the exhibition to be held in 2014.
 - An application to the Dahl Trust should now be able to go forward.
 - The deadline needs to be watched
 - David Coutts will contact Warwick Wright and ask for an update at the May Council meeting.
 - Consideration needs to be given to the best way of providing assistance to Warwick.

5. Reports

5..1. Executive Director

- In the absence of Judy West this item was covered in 5.2.

5..2. General Manager

- Operational and capital works budgets are being prepared,
- The payment from Parks Australia has been increased but not by enough to cover increases in costs.
- Further savings will have to be sought and may include staffing level reassessment
- Peter Byron will provide an “in confidence” briefing of ANBG budget information before next month’s Council meeting.
- David Coutts expressed the wish to see historic budget and staffing information for comparison.
- David Coutts had prepared a letter to the Departmental Secretary but after comments he had decided to address the letter to the Minister and also copy it to the Secretary with a covering note.
- The Red Centre Garden was progressing with further plantings scheduled in early May and in spring prior to the opening.
- The metal surround for the Meeting Place will be in place in a couple of weeks.
- The slab will be poured in about a month and the artwork installation will follow.
- There had been a suggestion through David Coutts from a guide at the National Gallery, with reference to the “Meeting Place” artwork, that there could be some sort of function linking the gallery to the opening of the Red Centre Garden. This had been passed on to ANBG.
- New parking machines will be in operation on April 3.
- Gardening Australia had been in the Gardens filming for a TV segment in May.

5..3. Friends Liaison.

- The Summer Sounds Concerts review had been finalised and will be circulated..
- The Sunset Cinema had attracted 4653 customers, averaging 270 per session.
- The Family Picnic Day on Sunday 7th April will be opened at 11:30 AM by Shane Rattenbury.
- Advertising for the Guides course had commenced and applications will close on May 3rd.
- Bronwyn Copp will start the review of the BRC to be finished by June.
- Julie Akmacic is away until August 18th. Two staff will job share to cover Julie’s position.
- Dan Carmody is on leave for a month. Bruce Driver is standing in.
- There had been good visitor numbers over Easter.
- It was unfortunate that the Flora Explorer was out of commission over Easter.

5..4. Treasurer

- As the Treasurer had been away the monthly report was held over.
- The Treasurer drew attention to a cost blow out in the cost of the Seedbank aspirator from the agreed \$20,000 to \$27,000. Peter Byron explained that there had been some unforeseen customs and import charges as well as currency changes resulting in the increase. Council reluctantly agreed to funding the new cost. (Moved Dennis Ayliffe, seconded, David Coutts).
- The cost of the Scales for the Seedbank was \$1,000 less than budgeted.
- There was discussion on reinvestment of matured fixed term deposits. After consideration of upcoming commitments it was decided to put \$200,000 in a 6 month fixed term at 4.1% and move \$20,000 to the at-call account. (moved Marion Jones, seconded, David Coutts. Motion carried)
- The following payments were approved (Moved John Connolly, seconded Marion Jones. Motion carried)
 - \$64 Wine purchase for Art Show opening
 - \$5,900 Summer Sounds Concerts for Sound System & 1 band.
 - \$220 Growing Friends expenses
 - \$100 Friends Lounge supplies, (tea., coffee etc)
 - \$110 Association of Friends of Botanic Gardens annual subscription.

5..5. *Secretary*

- The correspondence list for March was tabled

5..6. *Projects*

- Peter Byron tabled a spread sheet of current projects and their related funding
- The Water Fountain was still awaiting a plumber for installation
- The Environment Monitoring Stations were now working satisfactorily.
- The installation of a further station in the Red Centre Garden had been suggested and would be assessed.
- There was a suggestion that a “ChatterVox” portable amplifier be purchased for communication with larger tour groups and possibly in the Red Centre Garden. A suitable system was thought to be priced at around \$350 and it was decided to see if one could be obtained for trialling. Dennis Ayliffe will liaise with Steve Speer.

5.7 *Public Fund*

- No report

5..8. *Membership*

- The membership Committee reported that membership stood at 1326 representing approximately 1700 individuals.
- New Members Walk was scheduled for 19th May. Morning tea will be provided prior to a guided walk. Two guides will be required.

5..9. *Thursday Talks*

- The talks programme for the period September to November was in place.
- An article on the Centenary talks had been prepared for Campsis

5..10. *Newsletter & Broadcast Emails.*

- Fronds had been distributed before Easter and the publishing team were commended for another excellent issue.
- Barbara Podger drew attention to the need for some succession planning given that Anne Rawson had been doing this side of the Fronds publication for some time and that skills in using the design programme would be necessary.
- Anne Campbell reported that there had been a good response to the Fronds notice asking for expressions of interest in the Plant Science group.

5..11. *Guides*

- It was decided to reimburse the earlybird registration fee for Guides attending the Christchurch Guide Conference in November up to a total of \$3,000. In the event of this being exceeded the reimbursement will be pro-rata. (moved, Glenys Bishop, seconded David Coutts. Motion carried).
- Advertisements for the Volunteer Guides training course had gone out
- Information sessions for prospective guides will be held on Wednesday April 3rd at 12:30 PM, Monday April 8th at 5:30 PM and April 12th at 12:30 PM. Glenys Bishop and Steve Speer will give the presentations.
- The guides convener asked for guidance on whether she should tell new recruits that they should be members of the Friends. Council members expressed a strong view that Friends volunteers must be members. Management representatives at Council agreed that this was highly desirable but should be limited to a strong recommendation. The matter was not finalised and the guides convener was advised for the moment to tell the new recruits that all guides are members of the Friends.
- New guides should commit to availability for at least a year and attendance to the monthly guides’ meeting.

5..12. *Social Events & Activities*

- The next meeting of the committee will be in June.
- Organisation for the Family Picnic Day on Sunday April 7th was well in hand with Barbara Podger coordinating.
- Barbara Podger asked for approval for expenditure of about \$100 for supplies for the Picnic Day that might not be covered by the ACT grant. This was given..
- Bird Guides had been arranged for Bird Walks as were drivers for the Flora Explorer trips to the Red Centre Garden.
- Guides will be manning a information desk and giving guided walks,
- The Botanic Art group will be giving demonstrations of their artwork.

- 5..13. *Growing Friends*
- The plant sale is on April 13th.
 - The plant list will be put on the Friends website
 - Mike Johnson will look after the sale (and silent auction) of Murray Fagg's books.
- 5..14. *Website*
- A few entries had been updated
- 5..15. *sBotanic Art Group*
- About 60 had attended the opening of the 2013 exhibition which will conclude on the April 7th Family Picnic Day.
 - It appears to have been quite successful with about half sold.
 - Extra paintings will be put up for sale on the Family Picnic Day
- 5..16. *Photography Group*
- An information flyer promoting the group had been produced.
 - Steve Speer and Barbara Podger drew attention to a couple of minor amendments that should be incorporated into future printings of the flyer.
 - The group will provide material for the Bush Capital Day in November
- 5..17. *Other Business*
- Philip Finley had offered to assist with pro-bono legal advice to the Council of Heads of Botanic Gardens Inc.
 - Barbara Podger requested that the Council have a discussion the policies and arrangements for volunteering.
 - The question of membership fees was raised as was recruitment of new members.
 - It was decided to have a meeting of the Elected Council members to discuss questions relating to volunteering as well as addressing the membership fees structure and recruitment strategies.
 - *Given that the ANBG budget will be discussed at the May meeting it was tentatively agreed to have this discussion at a special meeting drawing in members of the various groups possibly before the June Council meeting.*

The meeting was closed at 3:40 PM

Minutes Approved by Council

7 May 2013