

**Meeting of Council
Tuesday 6th August 2013
1.30pm Dickson Room**



Minutes

Attendance

- Present Barbara Podger (Chair), John Connolly, Lesley Jackman, Marion Jones, Glenys Bishop, Warwick Wright.
- Ex officio: Alan Munns Peter Byron, Anne Phillips, Jan Finley.
- Apologies David Coutts, Anne Campbell, Judy West, Steve Speer, Dennis Ayliffe

1. The meeting was opened by the Vice-President, Barbara Podger at 1:35 PM

2. Minutes Confirmation

- Glenys Bishop proposed some changes to the wording of Items 4.3 and 5.6 in the circulated minutes of the July 2nd Council meeting
- The amended minutes of the meeting were accepted on the motion of Glenys Bishop, seconded by Leslie Jackman

3. Matters Arising From Minutes

3.1 Red Centre Guides Handbook

- Glenys Bishop reported that the proposed printing of the Red Centre Garden Guides' handbook was too expensive. The document is on the Guides WIKI; a printed version had been prepared by Andy Rawlinson and four copies are in the Guides Office. Photos of some Red Centre Garden plans, showing them in their natural environment are being placed in two folders and will be available for the use of Guides taking tours to the Red Centre Garden
- An article on the Red Centre Garden to appear in Fronds has drawn material from the handbook

3.2 2014 Eucalypt Exhibition and Dahl Trust funding application

- Warwick Wright reported that a meeting with the graphics designer had been arranged and a costing estimate would be drawn up after that meeting
- The closing date for the applications is 1st September.

3.3 Schools Photography competition brochure

- Siobhan Duffy had redesigned the brochure logo for the Schools Photographic Competition

3.4 In Flower This week

- There were no further developments on the move to fortnightly updates as Steve Speer is on leave.
- Peter Byron suggested that Helen McHugh might talk with Barbara Daly

3.5 BRC Review

- Bronwyn Copp had carried out some surveys and talked to some stakeholders. The report is to be finalised in the next week or so and will be presented to the ANBG. Management Team.

4. General Business

4.1 Red Centre Garden Friends Project name

- The official name is now "The Red Centre Pavement Artwork"
- Council thought a more inspiring name might be found.
- Suggestions also included "Friends Artwork" and "Therese Pwerlel Artwork"

4.2 VIC Volunteer manning

There was lengthy discussion on the ANBG decision not to staff the Visitors' Information Centre on weekdays and the request made to the Friends for volunteers to operate the desk in the VIC for part of weekdays as a "meet and greet" service. Other function formerly carried out by the VIC staff, such as answering the phone, taking venue and functions bookings and looking after the theatre operation will be dealt by ANBG staff elsewhere..

- Recruiting.

1. Peter Byron said that 10 volunteers had come forward so far. Calls for volunteers are on the

- Friends website and would be in the next Friends issue.
2. There had been interest from the new Guides,
 3. A training session will be held on 20th August
- VIC Operation – Peter Byron
 1. An Information Desk has been placed in a more prominent position opposite the entrance
 2. The desk will be serviced by volunteers between 10:00 AM and 3:00 PM (probably in two sessions).
 3. In the initial period, staff will fill gaps.
 4. The Bookshop indicated willingness to hand out brochures, maps etc at other times.
 5. A contact phone list is on display.
 6. The duty ranger will look after the Theatre.
 7. A ranger will look after the VIC at weekends (2 on duty) and there is a number of trained persons who can be called in to fill casual vacancies caused by holidays, sickness etc.
 8. Peter Byron expressed the view that having volunteers on the desk would provide a better visitor experience and, taking into account the budget pressures on ANBG, it also would provide better use of staff.
 9. He also indicated that there was there was no staff resistance.
 - Budget
 1. Alan Munns queried where the cost saving was to be achieved. Peter Byron said that functions previously carried out at the VIC, apart from “Meet and Greet”, had been reassigned to other ANBG job descriptions. A term contract position had expired and would not be renewed. However the person involved is on the casual rangers list.
 2. In answer to some comments Peter Byron stated that there had not been a “cut” in the ANBG budget, it was the same as last year. The 2 ½ % “efficiency dividend” removed funding for the normal fixed cost rises. It was likely that further savings of the order of \$200,000 would be necessary next year.
 3. Jan Finley mentioned that the Sydney University Nicholson Museum charged \$25 per head for School visits. She undertook to find out how this was funded.
 - Council Concerns
 1. Several Council members said they had met visitors who had been unable to obtain information they sought, e.g. Information on Guided Walks.
 2. Council expressed the view that the signage providing directions and information for times when the desk was unmanned was inadequate, More prominent signs are needed
 3. Barbara Podger commented that she was surprised that there had been no public announcement of the change in the VIC, that there had been little consultation with the Friends and that there was not enough notice given for the Friends to recruit volunteers.
 4. Peter Byron said that the shortness of time was because of the delay in the finalisation of the budget by Parks Australia. He said he had talked to David Coutts about the possibility in early June and to the Friends Executive on June 24th. He also said that the changes in the VIC would not have an adverse visitor impact. However Barbara Podger pointed out that it certainly would have an impact on the Friends and, more particularly, on the Guides.
 - Council Resolution
 1. There was agreement amongst Council that it was unfortunate that more time was not given for Council to assess ramifications of the changes at the Visitors Information Centre both on the Friends .
 2. Barbara Podger proposed the following resolution to be put the Council

Council is disturbed that the move to remove paid staff from the Visitor Centre on week days represents yet another cut in the resources for the ANBG which will impact on the public and on our volunteers.

We are also concerned that Management is seeking to have volunteers operate the “meet and greet” activity in the Centre during the week.

In the past the Friends have had a policy of not taking on functions that were previously undertaken by paid staff because of concerns that this would impact on future funding for those functions, and also that this could affect the relationship between paid staff and volunteers.

At the same time, Council believes that it is important that information and assistance for visitors to the Gardens continue to be provided in a professional and welcoming manner. Since this service will no longer be provided by paid staff during the week, Council agreed to seek expressions of interest from members in volunteering in the Visitor Centre.

The motion was held over for further discussion by Council

4.3 Friends Liquor Licence

- The Friends Executive was to meet with Pat McKenna to discuss the changes to the liquor licence applicable in the ANBG and the impact on Friends functions involving liquor sales.

5. Reports *Peter Byron dealt with reports covered by Agenda Items 5.1,5.2, & 5.3*

5.1 General Manager.

- The Red Centre Garden construction was nearly finished. Some pavement with the wrong coloured pigment is being replaced and some unused funds will be used to replace the entrance footpath with red sandstone pavers,
- There will be a further planting in September.
- A soft opening of the Garden will happen on the completion of this.
- The official opening will probably be on the Bush Capital weekend.
- Warwick Wright suggested that an access path leading from the head of the Sydney Region Basin to the Red Centre Garden and the Glass Houses, Peter Byron said that there was no money available at the moment
- The lower boardwalk is to be replaced in the capital works budget.
- Incorporation of some Public Artwork in this is being investigated,
- The pergola in the cafe is being replaced by an adjustable “Vergola” system covering out as far as the decking. Heaters and lighting will be built in. Completion is expected by early September.
- ANBG is submitting an entry for an ACT Tourism Award, ecotourism section.
- A horticulturist from Uluru NP, with arboreal experience as well, has been recruited .
- There are three other positions in horticulture to be filled.
- The plumber position is being re-advertised after the appointee only stayed a couple of weeks.
- Pamille Berg is working on an updated Public Art strategy. There will be a presentation addressing this on Wednesday 7th August.
- The plant stocktake is progressing with the Rockery the next target area.
- There has been some maintenance on the Eucalypt Lawn with a number of trees being removed and mulching around others.
- ANBG has taken over lawn mowing from the contractor as it has been judged to be more cost effective. A new mower has been acquired and staff are being asked to do the mowing on a roster basis.
- There was discussion on the state of repair of the glasshouses. Peter Byron said that the priority at the moment was directed at a new Seedbank facility

5.2 *Treasurer*

- The monthly financial statement had been circulated.
- Marion Jones said that she did not think that MYOB was suitable for the Friends accounts. She was looking at “Adminbandit” which is designed for not-for-profit organisations at \$30 per month .
- Motion:- That the accounts be received and payment approved (Moved, Marion Jones, seconded Warwick Wright). Motion carried
- Barbara Podger stated that she had examined and approved the July bank statement

5.4 *Secretary*

- The correspondence list for July had been circulated
- There had been a letter from the Registrar of Environmental Organisation drawing attention to the requirement of a return by the end of the year. (Public Fund)
- A letter from the Australian Charities Commission requested details of our 2013 operation. The return is on-line and the details necessary are on file in the Friends Office under “Australian Charities Commission” and will also be on the Friends computer in the “Secretary’s Docs”
- Marion Jones suggested that a “Statutory Authority” file be set up to keep together such documents.

5.5 *Social Events*

- Jan Finley reported that there had been a meeting of the Major Events committee to discuss the Bush Capital Celebration being held on the 2nd and 3rd November
- There will be a 3 hour family concert on the 2nd. (6 PM to 9 PM). Tickets at \$35 per family, \$10 for singles, will be sold through Eventarc online.
- There will be food outlets and the Friends will be asked to run a drinks table.
- Daytime events will include entertainment a guided walks particularly focussing on the Red Centre Garden .
- Preliminary planning for the Summer Concerts had commenced
- They will run on the first four weekends in January.
- No sponsor had been lined up but it was hoped to source funding from an ACT Government agency.
- Collection points and the operation of a drinks table will be discussed at the next meeting of the committee.
- Breakfast with the Birds is advertised in Fronds and the organisation was in place.
- Bookings will be through an online booking

6. *Friends Group Reports*

6.1. *Volunteer Guides Documents*

- Meeting minutes 16 July 2013
- The Practicalities of being a Guide 2013.
- Volunteer Guides’ role
- Statistical summary to June 2013.

6.2 Membership July 2013 Report

6.3 Projects

- The Water Fountain had been installed near the VIC The Friends acknowledgement is temporary.

6.3 Growing Friends Meeting Report 6 July 2013

6.4 Thursday Talks Meeting Report 18 July 2013.

The meeting was closed at 3:50 PM

D. Coutts
President

3 September 2013