



# FRIENDS OF THE CANBERRA INTERNATIONAL ARBORETUM AND GARDENS (CIAG) INC

DATE AUGUST 2008 | VOLUME 2

Very warm greetings to all. I hardly know where to begin since our first newsletter, and our AGM. The executive and I have been working steadily toward our first community event which will be our involvement in Floriade.

A special thanks to our AGM guest speaker Alex Smart, the past President of Cranbourne Botanic Gardens Annex in Victoria. Alex provided our members with a broad overview of the potential of a Friends group. He outlined the different and varied sub-groups which his umbrella organization runs, and gave our members inspiration to look to the future, and be imaginative regarding supporting the development of the Canberra International Arboretum and Gardens.

Since our AGM Friends has been involved in a number of activities leading up to our first community event at Floriade. We will present a marquee which will offer an informative display outlining the present, and the future direction of CIAG, along with all our stakeholders associated with our group. These will include the National Bonsai and Penjing Collection of Australia, Southern Tablelands Ecosystems Park Project, Australian National University Research, Friends of ACT Arboreta, and Carers ACT. The NBPCA will open during Floriade (see the article in this newsletter).

The big and burning question we are asking the community during Floriade will be "What is an Arboretum, and what does the word "arboretum" mean to you?" How can we, the community engage with our new arboretum. If you can come up with a descriptive and catchy slogan, you might be the winner of a great prize.

We have been conducting Volunteer training sessions in anticipation of working with the community, and we have

begun our first "hands on" involvement on the site. Many thanks to all who have volunteered so far. More volunteers are very welcome. A special thanks to our Secretary Jocelyn Plovits who continues to work steadily through mounds of paperwork.

We have now begun building sub-groups for members which include:- on site planting and maintenance, information presenters, bonsai volunteers, bird observation and documentation, fundraising and events.

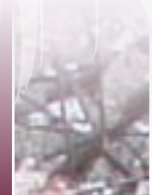
Friends has now an informative brochure and membership application form which is available to all members who would like to be involved in sharing our enthusiasm with your friends and work colleagues. Please contact the office if you would require copies.

There is now great excitement on the CIAG site. Daily the site is taking shape, and from many aspects across Canberra the work on the site can be seen. Thousands of trees have now been planted, with the inaugural International Tree Planting Ceremony taking place on the 29th July. This was a celebration of great significance, with the first tree being planted by His Excellency Mr Takaaki Kojima, Ambassador of Japan. This tree was the first of the Yoshino Cherry Tree forest. Over the next few months the roads will be constructed and the dam will be completed.

It is an exciting project which I am looking forward to sharing with you and the broader community long into the future.

Cheers for now and I look forward to seeing you at Floriade at our marquee near Stage 88.

*Sherry McArdle - English*  
Chair.





## NATIONAL BONSAI AND PENJING COLLECTION OF AUSTRALIA

The National Bonsai and Penjing Collection of Australia will be officially opened on the weekend of 27-28 September 2008. The NBPCA will be located in the yard of the old Caretakers Cottage near Stage 88, right in the middle of Floriade.

The NBPCA will be a permanent display of bonsai from all around Australia. Bringing some of these trees to Canberra has involved a lot of planning and some unusual expeditions.

Five large splendid trees had been donated from Perth WA and after looking into the costs and logistics of sending them by air freight or road transport it was found to be prohibitively expensive and unreliable. It was decided to send the Interim Curator to pick up the bonsai himself. This involved a long drive across the Nullabor in his van to collect the bonsai with his wife acting as co-driver.

Plant quarantine is very stringent in WA and so the bonsai had to be inspected and cleared by Quarantine WA before they could be taken out of the state.

The first bonsai to be picked up was the biggest and heaviest and it took five people to lift and maneuver the bonsai through a narrow

gate and into the van. The rest of the bonsai were picked up over the course of the day and were carefully packed to ensure that they did not slide about and damage each other on the long trip to their new home on the other side of the continent.

The following morning the van was driven to the East Perth Railway Station and loaded onto the rear of the Indian Pacific for its two day return trip to Adelaide. Because of the height of the van the train could not take it all the way to Sydney as the tunnels and underpasses are too low on that portion of the trip.

All in all the trip involved being away from home for 18 days and 6,806 klms were driven in the van with another 2,700 klms on the train. It was worth all the effort to secure the wonderful bonsai from the west.

The bonsai from WA included both native and exotic species. They are:-

- A large group of *Melaleuca raphiophylla* (swamp paperbark)
- A single *Melaleuca raphiophylla* (swamp paperbark)
- A *Callistemon viminalis* "Captain Cook" (bottlebrush)
- A group of *Acer palmatum* (japanese maple)
- A group of *Fagus sylvatica* (european beech)

**Grant Bowie | Interim Curator NBPCA**





## STEP OFFERS GIFT TO ARBORETUM

*The Southern Tablelands Ecosystems Park (STEP) has offered the Canberra International Arboretum and Gardens (CIAG) Project a community run facility, displaying key narratives about ecosystems of the Southern Tablelands. The facility's later stages will include education, training and extension programs that support the region's schools, community groups and government agencies to conserve and restore local ecosystems; and a cultural and social centre for visitors displaying a rich and interactive biodiversity experience of the ecosystems of this region.*

STEP will donate thousands of trees and plants together with the priceless expertise and enthusiastic volunteers to plant and run a facility within the Arboretum. STEP has welcomed the opportunity to work in partnership with the Territory and with the Arboretum architects to establish a formal design for the tree plantings and gardens, to present key features of significant Southern Tablelands Ecosystems. The facility is planned for three blocks, commencing with block 100 on the north-west boundary of CIAG.

STEP is an incorporated association that includes some well known conservation science and horticultural experts from this region. We have over fifty members including affiliate organisations such as the Friends of the Grasslands, the Australian Native Plant Society ACT Region, Environment ACT, Canberra Field Naturalists, Canberra Herpetologists, the Australian National Botanic Gardens and the Queanbeyan City Council.

In early August 2008, STEP was delighted to receive a letter from the Executive Director of the

Chief Minister's Department with the exciting news that the Department was pleased to welcome the contribution proposed by STEP and setting out an in principle provision by the Territory of various services and resources to establish the STEP plantings. The acceptance of STEP's offer is subject to all parties reaching agreement on the design.

The STEP display offers an exciting range of opportunities including:

- The story of the dominant iconic trees within our region's landscapes
- The hilltops to valleys (i.e. forest to grasslands) story of the landscapes within our region
- The diversity and edges story of the ecosystems within our region
- The story of the setting for National Capital (presenting information about Canberra's landscape setting, what it was like before 1913 when it became the Capital)
- Stories about how the ecosystems provide habitats for plants, birds, animals and people and how they make adaptations to survive.
- The story about the importance of conservation of native southern tablelands ecosystems
- The opportunity for our community to engage with techniques and experiences that can support ecosystems
- The opportunity for individual empowerment for becoming involved and do things to develop this facility

Earlier in July 2008, we participated in a productive and exciting workshop, chaired by the CIAG Project Director. The landscape architects for CIAG also played an important role to develop the key elements for our design. The workshop included a site inspection to see how well the elements of the design would match the topography and physical condition of the three blocks.



The workshop noted the three key elements essential to our design.

### 1. The inclusion of key ecosystems from the Southern Tablelands Bioregion.

Bioregions are large, geographically distinct areas of land with common characteristics such as geology, landform patterns, climate, ecological features and plant and animal communities. The ACT encompasses part of two bioregions: the Australian Alps and the South-East Highlands. The STEP proposal for species found on the Southern Tablelands bioregion aligns closely with the South-East Highlands bioregion and the lower elevations of the Australian Alps' bioregion.

### 2. The sequence of forest, woodland and grassland from the highest to the lowest points in a landscape.

The major ecosystem types that STEP wants to demonstrate at CIAG are: forest, woodland and grassland. (Of course there other ecosystem types eg riparian which may be included in the garden beds at a later stage of the project). It should also be noted that there are transitional

areas between each of these ecosystems. A key element is that the species of trees change with the types of forest and woodlands, topography and position on the slope.

The density of the trees and the spacing between the trees in the landscape is an essential element in the design. A forest has a joined up canopy and woodland has an open canopy, grassland has few trees if any at all.

The CIAG site has a fire protection requirements and the fuel load of the STEP elements sits nicely with the need to have low fire fuels at the western boundary of the CIAG blocks on the proposed STEP site. The transect down the slope for the forest, woodland and grassland features would feather into the existing grassland outside block 100 and maximise the interface with the existing land.

### 3. Eucalypt species to be selected.

The dominant structure for each ecosystem will be represented by the dominant species for that ecosystem (to simplify the concept). The table below presents the list of ecosystems and tree species being considered for the STEP design.

Forest	Woodland	Boundary
Species	Species	Species
<b>Dry</b>		
<i>E. macrorryncha</i> (red stringy bark)	<i>E. melliodora</i> (yellowbox)	<i>E. stellulata</i> (black sally)
<i>E. rossii</i> (scribbly bark)	<i>E. blakelyi</i> (red gum)	<i>E. pauciflora</i> (snow gum)
	<i>E. bridgesiana</i> (apple box)	<i>E. rubida</i> (candle bark gum)
<i>E. mannifera</i> (brittle gum)	<i>E. nortonii</i> (long leafed box)	
<i>E. dives</i> (peppermint gum)		
<b>Wet</b>		
<i>E. viminalis</i> (ribbon gum)		
<i>E. dalrympleana</i> (mountain white gum)		
<i>E. delegatensis</i> (alpine ash)		



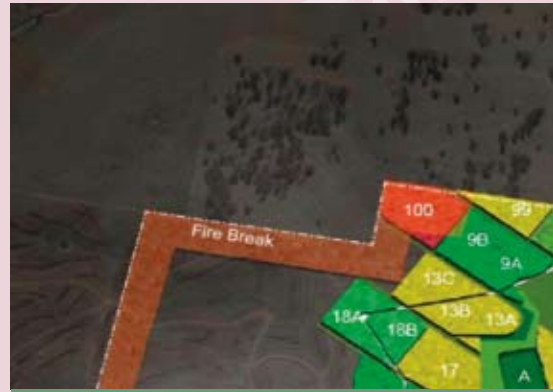
#### 4. Seedlings for Planting

STEP has commenced its program of sourcing the seeds and tube stock for these tree species so that we can commence planting on Block 100 in Spring or Autumn 2008-2009. Warren Saunders, Seeds and Plants Australia, will provide the stock and tubes for planting. He is one of our generous members who are contributing significant resources to this project. We are looking forward to meeting Friends and invite you to come and join us in digging and planting on Block 100 before the end of this year.

#### Conclusion

STEP sends its best wishes to Friends of CIAG and will continue to support you and CIAG in every way we can.

**Cathy Robertson** | [www.step.asn](http://www.step.asn)  
13 August 2008



*STEP area currently includes Block 100 and the proposed area of the fire trail between block 100 and block 130.*

## THE TASMANIAN ARBORETUM

*(By Linda Muldoon, CIAG Friend)*

The 58 ha site nestles amid undulating rural land at Eugenana, about 10 km south of Devonport. Planning for an arboretum began back in 1984 but development didn't get underway until 1988 when Bicentennial funding purchased 47 ha of the land. The Visitors' Centre was a gift from the Master Builders Association, while much of the other infrastructure has evolved through community donations.

This is an attractive site with an abundance of water features. The Don River forms the northern border, Melrose Creek meanders near the entrance, and there is also a large irregularly shaped lake, all of which nurture birds and aquatic wildlife.

International cool climate plantings are organised in geographical groups. These are supplemented with some natural eucalypts inherited from the original site and an area of natural rainforest with a walking track next to the river. Most of the plantation trees are quite immature, but doing well, and there are many recent plantings. This attractive form of *Athrotaxis cupressoides* (pencil pine) was doing splendidly in the Tasmanian alpine section.

I visited this arboretum in March and probably should have allowed half a day rather than a couple of hours. It is run by volunteers and a \$5 donation is requested on admission. There are good barbecue/picnic facilities and toilets near the entry. Disabled visitors can access part of the site by driving on a gravel circuit road.



## FIRST JAPANESE CHERRY TREE PLANTED AT THE ARBORETUM

The border for this newsletter features the Yoshino Cherry (*Prunus x yedoensis*). On 29 July 2008 the Ambassador of Japan planted the first Yoshino Cherry tree of a 320 tree forest. The planting of this symbolic tree and the planting of the whole forest marks the 15th anniversary of Canberra's sister city relationship with Nara, the ancient capital of Japan.

The iconic Yoshino Cherry is probably the most popular cherry tree in Japan and is most readily associated with the hanami cherry blossom viewing - a festival that is famous throughout the world.

The Yoshino Cherry is a deciduous tree with an impressive spring show and it can reach up to nine metres when mature, but is usually between five and six metres. This variety is unknown in the wild. It may be the result of a hybrid between *P. subhirtella* and *P. speciosa* but the parentage is still unclear. It has delicate almond-scented blossoms in white or pale pink which open well before the leaves. The spring foliage of young leaves is bright green, deepening in summer, with hues deepening with the changing autumn weather to a palette of orange-scarlet and yellow.

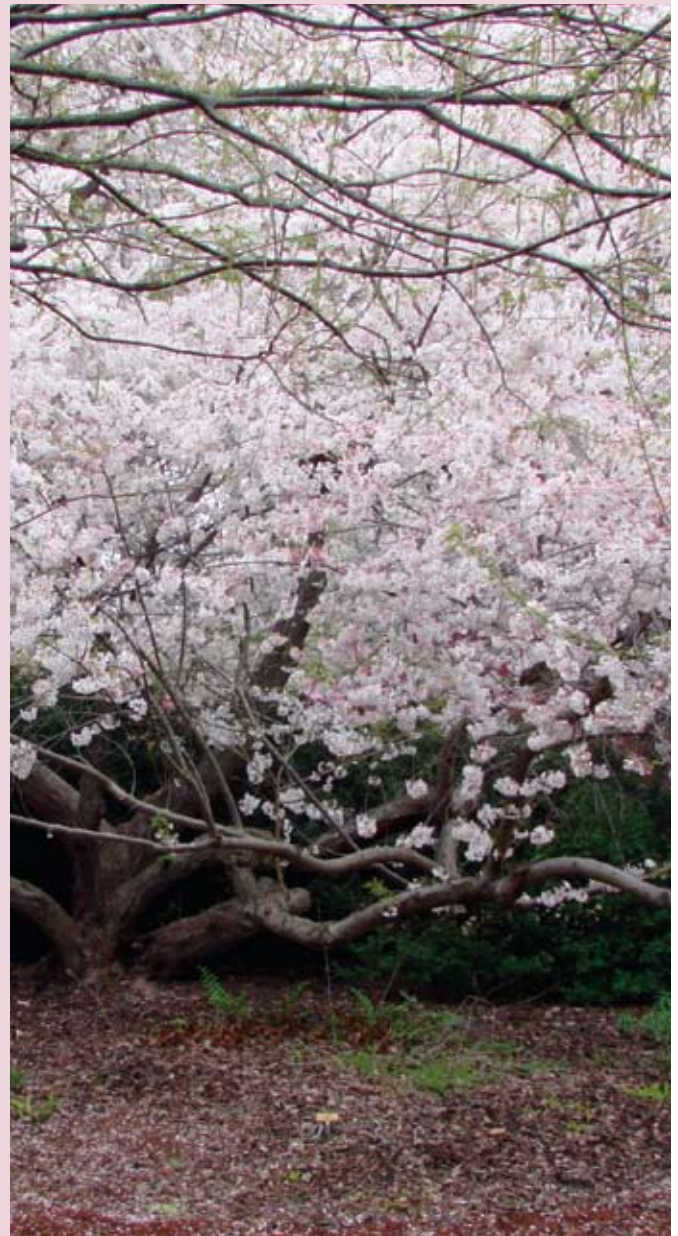
The Yoshino Cherry forest is being planted alongside the entry road into the Arboretum and will make a wonderful display in spring and autumn.

Many diplomatic missions are supporting the project by selecting species from their home countries, which can grow well on site, and which will add to the symbolic, conservation and international aspects of this project. It

is expected that these species will include trees that are threatened in the wild as well as symbolic trees.

For more information about each of the trees species being planted visit <http://www.cmd.gov.au/arboretum>

Information drawn from the Arboretum's forest Guide and Chief Minister's Department media release





## **PROGRESS REPORT**

**BY ROSALIND RANSOME -  
PROJECT DIRECTOR  
CHIEF MINISTER'S DEPARTMENT**

The Arboretum project has had a very busy and exciting winter season; first the interim Bonsai Pavilion at Commonwealth Park is taking shape designed by architect Peter Tonkin. The construction of the outdoor pavilion to temporarily house the National Bonsai and Penjing Collection of Australia, our first garden of the arboretum, is due to be completed by the opening of Floriade.

Up at the Arboretum site, construction is well underway of the next major civil works which includes upgrading the road network and the construction of a dam to collect water from the site to recycle for irrigation. The 37.2 megalitre dam will collect water from the site via water harvesting swales, designed to channel water from the site into the dam.

Last month, His Excellency the Ambassador of Japan, joined Chief Minister, Jon Stanhope and planted the first of 320 iconic Yoshino Cherry trees, *Prunus x yedoensis* at the Arboretum.

Members of the diplomatic community, business and community leaders and Japanese-Australia friendship groups assembled at the Arboretum to witness the first of many tree-planting ceremonies to involve the diplomatic community.

Other new forests planted this winter include 496 Desert Fan Palms from California *Washingtonia filifera*, and a rare variety of Silver Birch *Betula pendula var fontquerii* which is a native of Morocco and Spain where it survives in small dispersed sub populations in the dry montane woodlands. It has a conservation status of endangered.

Planting commenced in early July of 1702 Silver Birch trees, *Betula pendula*. This forest was planted as a 'host forest' to protect the

endangered variety of Silver Birch. The notion of the 'Host forest' allows for the inclusion of limited numbers of rare tree species to be displayed in the arboretum while still maintaining the continuity of a larger forest experience.

An appropriate seed source of this very rare species was located from Spain and an amount of seed was sent for sowing (the amount of seed available is very limited due to the endangered status of these types of tree species, and the contributing sources are only able or willing to very generously release limited amounts outside their own countries).

Of the 1000 seed sown at Yarralumla Nursery only 35 viable seedlings for planting were able to be propagated from this seed material, demonstrating the venerability of this wild variety.

It is the intention that the 'conservation' species (*Betula pendula var fontquerii*) once mature will have suitable propagation material taken from them to be used to replace the 'Host' species over time or to act as a repository for this species in Canberra and to be possibly shared with other institutions in the future.

This winter we have removed the dead wood from the cedar forest and the old *Pinus radiata* trees on Dairy Framers Hill and have cleaned up this area in time for a future planting of seventeen *Pinus halepensis* (Aleppo pine) trees, a gift from the Turkish Embassy.

Forests which will be planted over the coming weeks, to look out for, include , 428 *Cercis siliquastrum* (Judas Tree) behind the event terrace, 1082 *Acacia caerulea*, (Buchan Blue), 412 *Parrotia persica* (Persian Ironwood), 654 *Eucalyptus argophloia* (Western Queensland White Gum) and 135 *Araucaria araucana* (Monkey Puzzle) along the parkway below the Cedar forest.

The next 15 forest species have been selected by the Tree Expert Panel and will be announced shortly.



## AUSTRALIAN NATIONAL BOTANIC GARDENS

The Friends of the ANBG and the Friends of CIAG have agreed to work collaboratively to provide opportunities for all the Friends to explore the world of plants.

Like the CIAG, the ANBG plans construction work because it is addressing the significant cost of water for the Gardens. For some time Gardens' management has been exploring alternative ways both to use water more efficiently and also to reduce the amount of water used from the town water system.

Computerised watering systems have been installed since 2006. The next major step will be to install a new system of pipes to allow use of potable water in buildings and non-potable water for irrigation. The Gardens is continuing to discuss access to non-potable water from Lake Burley Griffin with the ACT government and the National Capital Authority.

In the next few months you may come across earth works as the contractors begin laying the new pipes. The construction work does not prevent access to the world's largest living collection of Australian plants.

The Friends of the ANBG provide lots of ways to experience the collection and learn more about the plant world, including offering free guided walks every day, and Thursday lunchtime lectures (see website <http://www.anbg.gov.au/friends/calendar.html>).

Over the next few months, the Friends of the ANBG will celebrate Spring by offering special free Wattle Walks at 11am daily from 1 to 7 September and Spring Flower Walks at 10am on Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays from Friday 19 September to Sunday 12 October. These walks cost \$8 per person (includes morning tea at Hudsons café).

Everyone is most welcome to attend!

### WESTBOURNE WOODS WALKS:

Sunday 14 September	Paul Dann	<i>Food from trees</i>
Sunday 12 October	Richard Hart	<i>Conifers for production</i>
Sunday 9 November	Warwick Wright	<i>Eucalypts in the Arboretum</i>

Meet at 9.30 am the entrance to the Royal Canberra Golf Club which is reached from Bentham Street, Yarralumla, wear sensible clothing. Walks last for about 2 hours.

Information contributed by FACTA





## FRIENDS of the CANBERRA INTERNATIONAL ARBORETUM and GARDENS

### Membership Application Form

Yes, I/we wish to become a Friend(s) of the Canberra International Arboretum and Gardens

1. Title..... First Name..... Last Name .....

2. Title..... First Name..... Last Name .....

Address.....

.....Postcode.....

Tel (h) .....(w).....

e-mail.....

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Membership arrangements (please indicate)

- Friend.....no cost
- Contributing Friend.....Single \$25
- Household .....\$30
- Contributing Concession .....\$20
- Association or Club.....\$50
- Corporate Friend .....\$2000

not registered for GST

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Payment details for contributing members:

Cash            Cheque            Credit Card

Cheques payable to the Friends of the Canberra International Arboretum and Gardens

\$..... Visa, Mastercard, American Express

Card no:.....

Card holders name.....

Expiry date: /    Signature.....

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For any enquiries contact

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## INAUGURAL WORKING BEE

I am excited and delighted to report to all our Friends that our first working bee on the CIAG site on 24 August was a great success. We could not have wished for finer conditions. Magnificent pre-spring day, not a breath of wind, and everyone was in fine spirit.

We broke up into three working groups. There were the hands on weeder's and clearers in the cedar forest, then the guard removalists in among the Camden White Gums some of which are now tipping 2 metres height, and last there were the furniture restorers. I feel sure you are asking, how did furniture become part of the equation. Well, the

furniture was very kindly donated to the Friends some months ago from the Southern Cross Club, and as it had all been very well used, we needed to give it some TLC.

All three groups worked feverishly over three hours, with a well deserved morning tea break provided in the morning. As you can see from the photos we were a happy and enthusiastic group.

To all, I can only say a very large thank you, it was a great inaugural Working Bee day.

Cheers for now,

*Sherry Mc Ardle- English*

