



# FRIENDS of the National Arboretum Canberra

## Newsletter 19 / December 2012

**Dear Friends**

***Festive greetings to you all!***

What a fantastic year it has been—the best Festival of the Forests yet, more and more visitors coming to Open Days @ Arboretum, the highest number ever of people visiting the National Bonsai and Penjing Collection of Australia *and* numerous other volunteer efforts in training the first group of new Arboretum guides, fundraising, tree measuring, frog watching, working bees and finishing up with our volunteers helping with the Voices in the Forest concert (see following pages). We've done all this as we've watched the fabulous new Visitor Centre being built, the reshaping of the amphitheatre and building of the new Pavilion. Information about the opening and the community festival will be provided to you in the new year.

Many of us have contributed to recordings collected by Jyll Bradley for her Centenary work called *City of Trees*. Among the many questions she asked were two that I will always remember: Why are you so passionate about the Arboretum; and What is your favourite tree and why? The answers about our passion for the Arboretum can be complex. I distilled my ideas to being about growth and hope for the future and my favourite tree is the one I am looking at now. What are your answers to those questions? Please send them to me by the end of January 2013 for inclusion in the next Newsletter.

The Arboretum Team has introduced a new logo for the National Arboretum Canberra and at our last General

Meeting members voted for a small change to our logo so that the colours of our leaves will match the colours in the new Arboretum logo. This change is important as we will need to show that we are connected to the Arboretum in many ways.

2013 is going to be busy. Providing volunteer guides will be an important task that we undertake to promote the Arboretum into the future. Do you want to be a guide once the Arboretum is open? Please let us know if you have not done so already. No prior knowledge is required as all the information needed is provided. The next training course commences on 14 January 2013 and finishes 21/22 January. There will be a course later in the year for more new guides. We have close to 100 volunteers signed up but room for plenty more, so I'm looking forward to hearing from you.

We will continue with tasks like tree monitoring, frog watching, explaining the National Bonsai and Penjing Collection of Australia, our working bees and of course planning for key events like the Festival of the Forests and other fund raisers. Our goal is as always to encourage community involvement in the Arboretum.

A hearty thank you to all the wonderful volunteers throughout the year and to all our members who are the best ambassadors for this sensational project.

See you at the Arboretum in 2013!

**Jocelyn Plovits**  
Chair

### IN THIS ISSUE . . .

***Voices in the Forest 2012: our volunteers*** page 2

***Voices in the Forest 2012: the concert*** page 3

***Information and Research Group*** page 7

***Friends' calendars still available*** page 7

***An artist at the Arboretum*** page 8

***Forest talk*** page 9

***Cork oaks in focus*** page 11

***The world of arboreta*** page 13



# Voices in the Forest 2012: our volunteers

A REPORT BY JOCELYN PLOVITS

I think you would all agree that Bob Winell sponsored a wonderful concert again this year and Damiana Vigone was an extraordinary event manager working within a complex construction site.

Our volunteers helped with seat set up and numbering, de-numbering and seat collapsing, ushering, providing children's activities, program selling, assisting the disabled and the provision of information and solutions to problems as needed.

A special thank you to Linda Beveridge who was the volunteer organiser on 24 November, Jeanette Hahn who co-ordinated program sales and Bronwyn Halbisch who was still there at 9.30pm waiting for Linda to return. Linda had gone to help a couple, one of whom had a mobility problem, and she waited with them until the NRMA arrived to get their car going. They left the site at approximately 10.30pm.

The Friends raised over \$1000 in book and calendar sales—all going towards the development of the Arboretum.

I think it would be fair to say it was very hot weather and the volunteers did get tired, however I have already been in touch with Dami and the Arboretum Team and expect that arrangements will be much more settled after the opening of the Arboretum in February.

So many thanks to all the wonderful volunteers: Linda Beveridge, John Bromhead, Tina Bromhead, Sue Brown, Michael Burton, Julie Butler, Robyn Callaway, Jenny Cantlon, Moira Castle, Sylvana Cradoc-Evans, Janet

*Below: Jennie Widdowson took this photo on her mobile phone while helping with the de-numbering and collapsing of seats.*



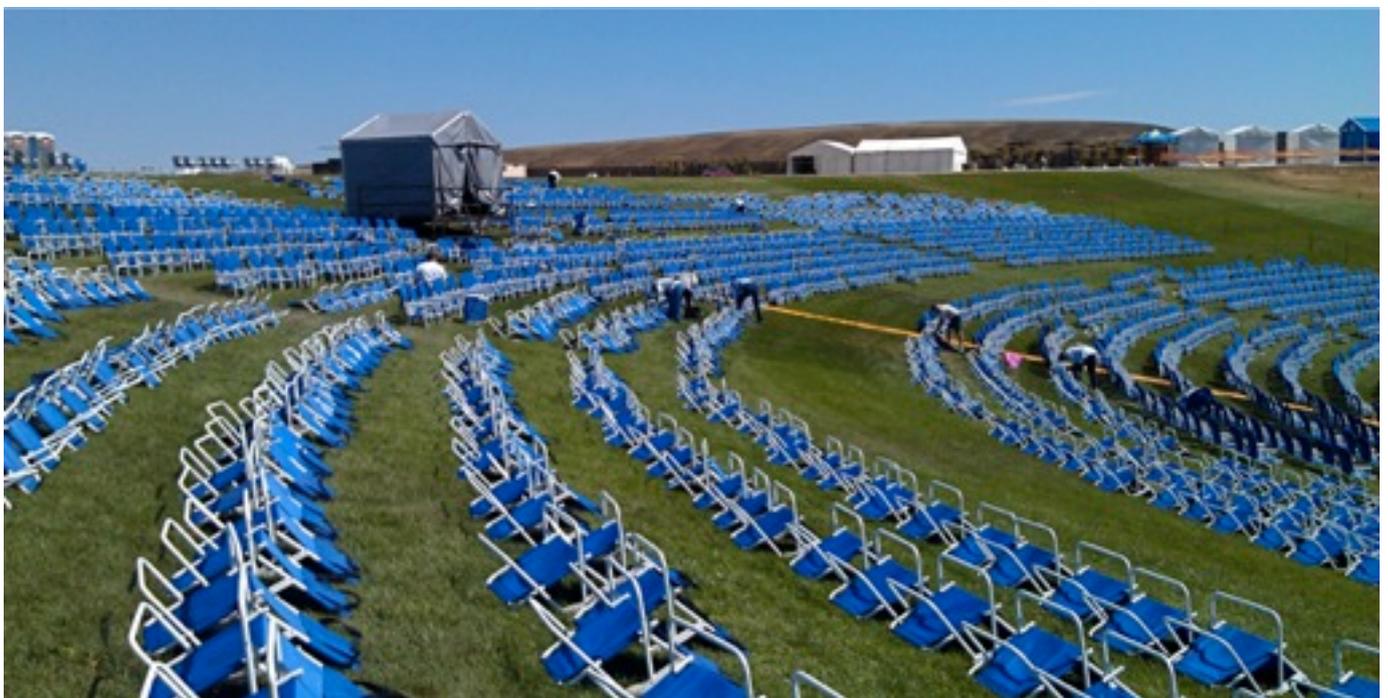
*Volunteers awaiting instructions in the Friends' tent.*

*Below: Valiant Friends working out in the hot sun, still numbering seats until after 1.00pm. PHOTOS BY LINDA MULDOON*



Edstein, Jacque Elliot, Julie Evans, Jill Freeman, Viki Fox, Jeanette Hahn, Bronwyn Halbisch, Mary Hodgkinson, Bev Kaiser, Tralie Kimlin, Shirley Krall, Naomi Landau, Michelle Lauder, Ermelindo Maculan (Mac), John Maddock, Judith Maddock, Minha Matuszyk, Kate McCarthy, Carmel Maher, Jan Morgan, Linda Muldoon, David Nicholls, Lorraine Nicholls, Chris Payne, Jim Payne, Jocelyn Plovits, Sanya Ritchie, Frank Stevens, Reet Vallak, Hans van Haalen, Sue Waterworth, Jennie Widdowson, Anthony Widdowson, Shirley Wilton.

Let's do it all again next year!



# Voices in the Forest 2012: the concert

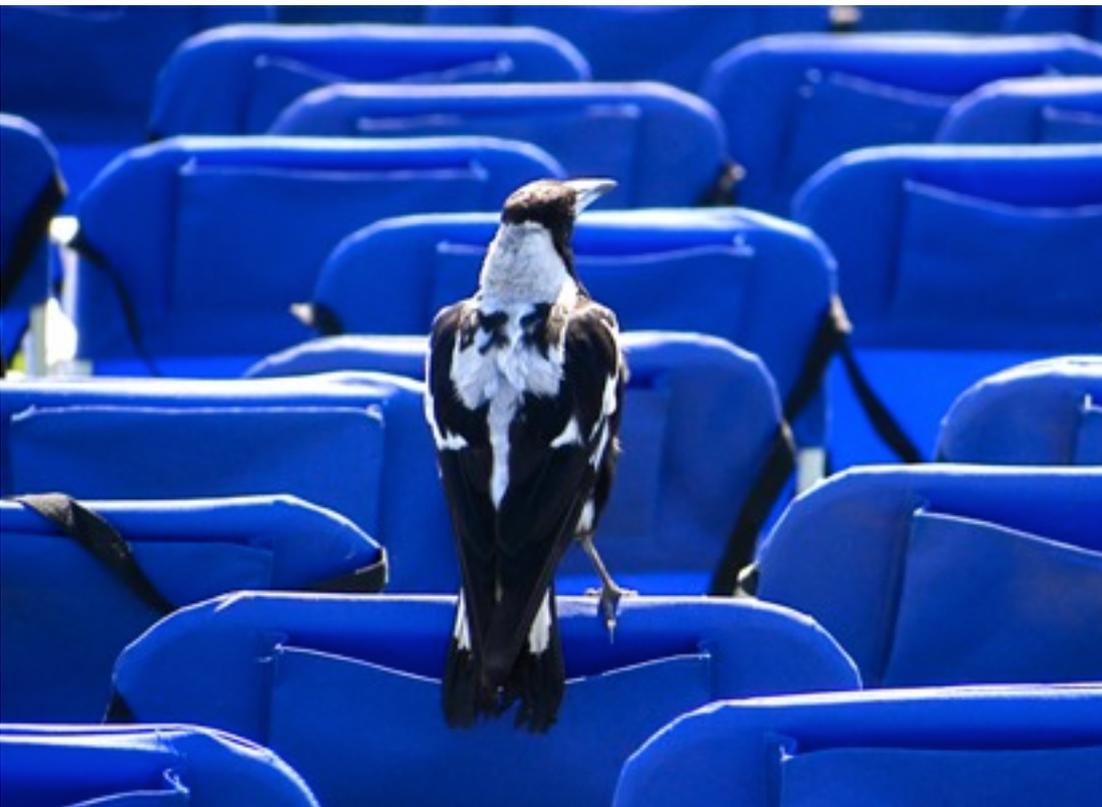
A REPORT BY LINDA MULDOON

We arrived at 8.30am on Saturday, 24 November (the day of the concert), to finish setting out the seats and erecting them. The arms of the seats were wet at this stage and self-adhesive labels don't stick to wet surfaces so we were issued with hundreds of paper wipes and we dried off every arm. Then we received instructions on the seating plan and how to attach the labels and we worked in teams of three, doing a block of seats at a time. There was some entertainment by this stage. The sound guys fine-tuned the sound systems and then the choirs began rehearsals. The predictable maggies came to inspect as they do with every Arboretum activity.



*Above: The sound guys fine-tuning the sound systems.*

*Below: The public began to take their their seats.*



*Top left: Volunteers worked in teams of three to number each section of seats.*

*Left: It's a rare event that escapes the scrutiny of the maggies.*



Some of us went home to get changed for our afternoon duties but we were back at 12.30pm for a briefing. The public began arriving at 2.00pm, in a trickle at first, but as 4.00pm approached the cars kept coming and the queues got longer.

The choirs began assembling in the area beyond the people sitting on the ground, at the far end of the amphitheatre arc, and soon the concert was underway.

Bob Winnel from The Village Building Company (the concert's major sponsor) introduced 666 ABC's Alex Sloane who once again did a sterling job as MC.

The Combined Youth Choir was made up of students from Aranda Primary School, Canberra Girls Grammar School and Woden Valley Youth Choir. Two other choirs performed during the concert, namely the Oriana Chorale and the ANU School of Music Chamber Choir.



Above: The Combined Youth Choir performing on stage.  
Below: Soloists from the Combined Youth Choir singing 'America' from West Side Story.

Below: The choirs began assembling prior to going on stage



Right: One of two 'hot' vocalists with the Royal Military College Big Band.





*Above: Children were delighted with the 'Jump' song.  
Above right: Those sitting on the grass got up and danced.*



Next it was the turn of the Royal Military College Big Band and this band is big! Five trumpeters, four trombonists, five saxophonists, two percussionists, one guitarist, one bass guitarist, one keyboard player and two vocalists; a veritable army of musicians! The RMC Big Band did one vocal number called 'Jump' and all the children in the audience did just that whenever the word jump was sung, even from a sitting position. Others were dancing on the grass with their parents. This really did feel as though the whole community was out enjoying themselves! The band performed 13 compositions in all, taking us up to the first interval.



*Amelia Farrugia took to the stage in Act 2.*

*This was the scene at the beginning of Act 2.  
An estimated 4400 people attended the concert.*





*The orchestra was looking happy at the beginning of Act 2.*

Act 2 began with an address by Her Excellency Ms Quentin Bryce, Governor-General of the Commonwealth of Australia, and the operatic part of the program followed.

This began with the distinguished Australian soprano, Amelia Farrugia, and then came Stuart Skelton, a world-renowned Australian tenor that now rarely performs in Australia. Between the two of them they delivered a total of 12 songs and arias in Act 2.

Another interval followed and Act 3 began with the Korean megastar, Sumi Jo, and the petite soprano didn't



*Stuart Skelton, tenor*



*Sumi Jo, soprano*





disappoint, giving seven solo performances and singing four duets with Stuart Skelton. Her last but one song was Andrew Lloyd Webber's 'Memories' which she sang to mark the forthcoming 10th anniversary of Canberra's horrific 2003 bushfires. We could nevertheless ponder that some good has been raised from the ashes— that if we hadn't had the bushfires, we wouldn't have the Arboretum or the Voices in the Forest concert—and this concert delivered just so much that was good.

The last song was a duet with Stuart Skelton: 'Time to Say Goodbye'. Bob Winnel then invited everyone to come to the next Voices in the Forest concert to be held on Saturday, 23 November 2013, starring Yvonne Kenny. Thousands of people then headed for their cars in the moonlight.

PHOTOS BY LINDA MULDOON

## Information and Research Group

BY GREG BLOOD

The Friends of the National Arboretum Canberra are interested in establishing an **Information and Research Group** to document and promote published information and research on the National Arboretum Canberra (NAC). The ACT Heritage Library (<http://www.library.act.gov.au/find/history>) is very interested in playing a role in the management and dissemination of information resources on the NAC.

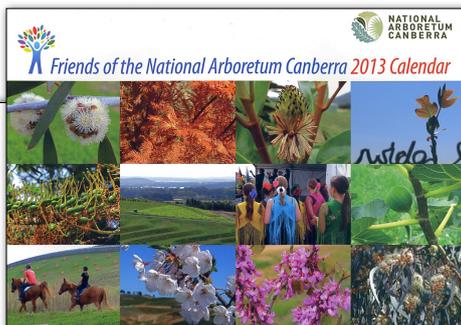
This management may include resources such as:

- ◆ Published books and reports
- ◆ Archives of the Friends (minutes, brochures etc)
- ◆ Photographic images—Images ACT (<http://www.images.act.gov.au>)
- ◆ Maps and plans
- ◆ Newspaper and journal articles
- ◆ Oral histories

The **Information and Research Group** will assist the ACT Heritage Library in locating and managing relevant resources. To begin the process, can you advise Greg Blood ([greg.blood@bigpond.com](mailto:greg.blood@bigpond.com) or ph 6258 9944) if you have any information resources that could be included in a **NAC Resource Listing** or deposited in the ACT Heritage Library. Resources of high interest are: brochures, booklets and posters, photographic images (site prior to NAC, open days, tree planting ceremonies, specific forests, specific trees, wildlife, construction, aerial views, etc) and journal articles. Photographic images may be used by researchers and members of the public so copyright ownership must be clearly established before depositing in the ACT heritage Library.

Another function of the Group may be to regularly meet to discuss research projects involving the NAC. Future research projects may include: history of the NAC, ecology of the NAC and development of forests etc.

Finally, if you are interested in becoming a member of the **Information and Research Group**, please contact Greg Blood ([greg.blood@bigpond.com](mailto:greg.blood@bigpond.com) or ph 6258 9944). Initial members of the group include: Antoinette Buchanan (Manager, ACT Heritage Library), Barry Nash (Friends), Ken Vesperman (Friends) and Greg Blood (Friends).



## The Friends' 2013 Calendar is still available!

Order via our website:  
[www.arboretumcanberra.org.au](http://www.arboretumcanberra.org.au)

Or pop into your nearest **Supabarn** supermarket. They're available at Canberra Centre, Kaleen and Wanniasa.  
(Look on the magazine stand)

**\$10.00 each**

# An artist at the Arboretum

BY ANNA HOWE

For most of us, inspiration in the Arboretum comes in a moment—when we catch our breath at a view in a particular light, or see shining tips of new growth in early spring. While our inspirations are transitory, Canberra artist Eve Sawa captures her inspirations in tangible and lasting forms in her paintings.

"I begin with the patterns and shapes of the trees and landforms; the colours come later", Eve said in describing herself as a representational painter. "I'm interested in responses to my paintings. A painting is only complete when a viewer looks at it and feels what it is like to be in the landscape. I want the viewer to experience a sense of coldness when they look at one of my stark white landscapes of the Snowy Mountains."

Eve's identification with the Arboretum site dates back to walks in the pine forests that reminded her of her Austrian family background and visits to Austria as a child: "Later on, I used to drive along the Parkway taking my daughter to school, and the devastation of the fires saddened me deeply. But then I saw a new landscape being created and fell in love with it again."

When she saw people working on the site, cutting into the land to make different shapes and textures, Eve says "I felt compelled to respond. From my early visits and learning about the Arboretum, I could see an exciting opportunity to record history as a painter.

I'm at the beginning of a project that is going to continue for many years."

Eve comes to painting from an environmental view and her work is imbued with thoughts of conserving the fragility of the landscape. "I'm

especially inspired by the conservation of endangered species in the Arboretum, and that some of the forests will be the largest plantings of these trees in the world", she said.

Eve will achieve her aim of bringing art into the Canberra 100 celebrations with her exhibition entitled **Arboretum Magnificentury**. She is planning to show around 25 paintings, ranging from small 'tree portraits' to large landscapes, and hopes that these different sized paintings will give more people the opportunity to have a lasting inspiration from the Arboretum than her usual large-scale paintings.

Friends of the National Arboretum Canberra are invited to the opening of **Arboretum Magnificentury** at the ANCA Gallery, 1 Rosevear Pl (off Antill St), Dickson, from 6.00pm to 8.00pm on Friday, 8 March 2013.



*Eve Sawa amidst the buds on the Buchan blue wattles, Open Day @ Arboretum, 11 November 2012.*

PHOTOS BY LINDA MULDOON



# FOREST TALK



## DOGWOODS IN FLOWER

Adam Burgess (Arboretum Curator) was the first to photograph the Japanese flowering dogwoods (*Cornus kousa*) in Forest 8 at the end of October.



## END-OF-YEAR BBQ IN THE HIMALAYAN CEDARS

This was held on 25 November, the day after the 'Voices in the Forest' concert, so some of us were feeling a tad weary. But there were many friendly faces, some of which arrived after hours of tree-measuring and/or removing seat numbers and collapsing chairs in sweltering temperatures. These surroundings would aid anyone's recovery though—this BBQ spot must surely be the best in Canberra.



## INTRODUCING 'CAROLINE'

In Forest 5, just down from Himalayan cedars, *Melia azedarach* 'Caroline' (white cedar) was flowering for the first time in late November.

## BOTH MAGNOLIAS IN BUD

On 11 October the host forest (*Magnolia grandiflora*) and the endangered *Magnolia delavayi* (far right) both appeared to be doing very well in Forest 7.



## CONKERS ARE COMING!

In Forest 4, horse chestnuts (*Aesculus hippocastanum*) had flowers developing into fruits in early November.



## HOW THE NEIGHBOURS SEE US

During Floriade I went on a Southern Cross ferry cruise to a garden tour at Government House. I had previously taken many photos with Government



House in the background but this was a chance to see how the Arboretum looks from there —Ed.

PHOTOS BY LINDA MULDOON UNLESS OTHERWISE STATED



## PLANTING PINK LADIES

On Sunday, 21 October, the Friends helped to plant around 6000 plastic 'pink ladies' at the Arboretum's Lot 85, near Tuggeranong Parkway, in support of the Breast Cancer Network Australia's national event: *Mini Field of Women*. The event which was held on Monday, 22 October, was organised by the Breast Care Nurses at Calvary Hospital to raise awareness of breast cancer.



## THE NEW BONSAI PAVILION

If it looks this good without exhibits, how good will it look when the National Bonsai and Penjing Collection of Australia moves in?

## WONDERFUL WOLLEMIS

Have you seen our wollemis lately? They are looking healthy, growing very well and many have male and female cones.



## THE COTTER PLOTS

The Friends of ACT Arboreta (FACTA) invited us to join them in a tour of the Cotter Plots. If, like me, you thought that these plantings would be somewhere at



The Cotter, you'd be wrong. The area that these plantings occupy is only about 1.5km from the Arboretum, off Cotter Road, between the ACT Equestrian Park and the motel. On the left of the above photo, Steve Thomas is telling us about the various species that were trialled there. This row of Chinese cork oaks (*Quercus variabilis*) was one of



the success stories with its very healthy bright green leaves.

At one stage several species of fruit trees were trialled but the idea of fruit trees as street trees was abandoned as it was likely to cause potential friction between those doing the nurturing and those doing the fruit-picking! —Ed.

# Quercus suber

## CORK OAK

BY LINDA MULDOON

*A stroll through the cork oaks provides an opportunity to escape the summer heat, so now seems an appropriate time to focus on this species. 'Quercus suber' now occupies Forest 1 at the Glenloch Interchange end of the Arboretum.*

Walter Burley Griffin identified the potential for cork oak in the Canberra region. He sent acorns, sourced from the Royal Botanic Gardens Melbourne, to Yarralumla Nursery for trial by Charles Weston. The resulting seedlings were planted out in October 1917. Acorns were also sourced from the Public Gardens in Kyneton, Victoria.

Consignments of Spanish acorns were lost at sea when SS *Boorara* was torpedoed and then four cases of 30,000 acorns on board SS *Ismailia* were also lost at sea. Nevertheless replacement supplies were eventually received and, by 1920, 9600 young cork oaks were

*Below: illustration from Köhler's Medizinal Pflanzen published in 1887. Below right: the bark of a cork oak, prior to stripping.*



*A shady glade of cork oaks in the Arboretum's Forest 1.*

occupying 8 hectares of this area that was then known as Green Hills.

In 1981, this plantation was listed on the Register of the National Estate and on the ACT Sites of Significance Register.

The first cork harvest was undertaken in 1948 and produced 'virgin cork' which is not dense enough to make stoppers for bottles. A second stripping was done in the 1970s and a third stripping in 2001 when two Portuguese cork strippers demonstrated their skills to the media and the public. The last time the cork was harvested was in 2005 when ACT Forests commissioned three Portuguese men to work over a two-week period and the cork was sold to plant nurseries for growing orchids.



The cork can be harvested every 9–12 years and stripping can be repeated about 12 times in a tree's lifetime. Our trees are not yet old by cork oak standards as they live between 150 and 250 years.

*Quercus suber* is a medium-sized evergreen oak tree which is native to south-west Europe and north-west Africa. It grows slowly to a height of 20m and a canopy width of 15m but is not usually that large in the wild.

The thick bark makes the tree particularly fire-resistant.

Small male and female flowers are produced on the same tree and pollinated by the wind. The leaves are 4–7cm long, slightly lobed or toothed, dark green above and light silvery green beneath, with the edges tending to curve downwards.

The acorns are 2–3cm long and held in deep cups that are fringed with elongated scales.

In Portugal and Spain the cork oak forests are home to the endangered Iberian Lynx and in north-west Africa they are home to the endangered Barbary Macaque tailless monkey.

Our forest provides a protective habitat for many bird species, for tiny fungi that appear on the bark in wet conditions and in the autumn we can observe extensive fairy rings of the red and white toxic toadstools: *Amanita muscaria*.

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#### REFERENCES

Susan Parsons' article on cork oaks—see [www.nationalarboretum.act.gov.au/tree-stories/cork\\_oaks](http://www.nationalarboretum.act.gov.au/tree-stories/cork_oaks)  
[www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Quercus\\_suber](http://www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Quercus_suber)

PFAF Plant Database



Top: Immature cork oak acorns emerging in April.

Centre: Mature acorns on the forest floor.

Below: This forest can look very different at different times of day.



PHOTOS BY  
LINDA MULDOON

## Derby Arboretum, UK, where it all began?

BY MAX BOURKE

One of the most extraordinary books on trees and how to manage them was written by the prolific English author, John Claudius Loudon, in 1838. The *Arboretum et Fruticetum Britannicum* was a very successful publication and copies came to Australia. It contained details of not only new and interesting tree species but also examples of layouts and management of such sites. At that time it was considered a very expensive book, costing £10, so Loudon produced a cheaper publication called *The Encyclopaedia of Trees*.

The Oxford English Dictionary attributes the use of the word 'arboretum' to this publication. Loudon was well-connected to a group of English intellectuals of the Enlightenment, known as the Derby philosophers, who included luminaries like Charles Darwin's grandfather, Erasmus. Also among them was the very wealthy philosopher and philanthropist Joseph Strutt. In the year that the great book was published, Joseph Strutt commissioned Loudon to design him a public arboretum in Derby. It was

*Below: The arboretum lodge framed by summer foliage, photographed by Chris Harris. Below right: Dinner plate with Royal Crown Derby's design 'Arboretum' and the arboretum's logo.*



opened in 1840.

The original layout of this 11 acre (4.5 hectare) site was to give 'common people' access to public land, not only for recreation, but for their education. The idea of 'public parks' was very novel at the time in the UK or anywhere else. The choice of species represented not only philosophical ideas concerning the meaning of trees but also the organisation of the botanical world. Loudon did not use the ideas of Linnaeus but those of another great 'natural system', that of A-P de Candolle. Both these botanical systems existed alongside each other (along with Jussieu's) in the pages of Loudon's books.

So the garden featured 1000 species of both native and introduced trees and shrubs and a small booklet was produced to give visitors an understanding of the history and significance of each species.

This public arboretum had an enormous impact on the design of such spaces throughout Europe and also shaped the rising interest in public gardens in the USA. Frederick Law Olmstead visited and admired the arboretum prior to his work on Central Park in New York and Washington.

The arboretum went into a long slow decline when it was seriously 'damaged' during World War II by its use for vegetable production in the 'Dig for Victory Campaign'. The author of this piece had the good fortune to meet the dogged individual Chris Harris who with other Derby people in quite recent years, aided by a grant from the National Lottery, set out to restore the essence of the original design along with many of the park's built features.

**December is the month for membership renewals!  
See page 14 for details**

# Membership application form

Please complete the form below **OR** go to [www.arboretumcanberra.org.au](http://www.arboretumcanberra.org.au) where you can join online and make a secure payment.

Yes, I/we wish to join the Friends of the National Arboretum Canberra Inc.

1. Title ..... First name .....

Last name .....

2. Title ..... First name .....

Last name .....

Address .....

..... Postcode .....

Telephone (h) ..... (w) .....

Email address .....

Do you agree to receiving notices of meetings by email?

YES/NO ..... Date of application .....

Please tick your relevant membership category:

- Single (\$25.00)       Association or club (\$50.00)  
 Concession (\$10.00)       Corporate Friend (\$2000.00)  
 Household (\$30.00)

**Memberships are due for renewal in December each year**

Please tick your method of payment

- Cash       Direct deposit  
 Cheque (cheques must be made payable to the Friends of the National Arboretum Canberra Inc.)

Details for direct deposit are:

WESTPAC, Petrie Plaza, Canberra ACT  
Account—Friends of the National Arboretum Canberra Inc.  
BSB No. 032719 Account No. 375379

If making a direct deposit, please make sure that you record your name so that your membership can be verified.

Send applications to: **The Secretary**  
**Friends of the National Arboretum Canberra Inc.**  
PO Box 48  
Campbell ACT 2612

## PLEASE REMEMBER

to notify us about changes to your contact details

## Contact

You can contact the Friends at [friends@arboretumcanberra.org.au](mailto:friends@arboretumcanberra.org.au) or via our website on [www.arboretumcanberra.org.au](http://www.arboretumcanberra.org.au) or by phone on 0406 376 711 during business hours

## Friends of the National Arboretum Canberra Inc.

### OFFICE BEARERS

Jocelyn Plovits, *Chair*  
Trish Keller OAM, *Deputy Chair*  
Colette Mackay, *Secretary*  
Richard Bear, *Treasurer*  
Spero Cassidy, *Events Co-ordinator*

### COUNCIL MEMBERS

Cathy Robertson, *STEP Representative*  
Linda Muldoon, *Publications Editor*  
Sherry McArdele-English

The Council (all of the above) meet on the second Tuesday of each month. We invite any member interested in joining the Council to contact us. We would definitely welcome more faces as we need five members for a quorum, which is sometimes difficult to achieve.

### LIFE MEMBERS

Sherry McCardle-English  
Roger Hnatiuk

### HONORARY MEMBER

Jon Stanhope

## Newsletter

The newsletter is published quarterly. Contact the editor, Linda Muldoon, on [lindaon@grapevine.com.au](mailto:lindaon@grapevine.com.au) if you would like to contribute to a future issue.

*The Friends thank the ACT Government and our sponsors for their support.*

*Information prepared by the Friends of the National Arboretum Canberra Inc.  
December 2012*

