

#### **Dear Friends**

A special festive greeting to you all!

What a fantastic time this first formal opening year has been, and what an honour it has been to be part of it all. Your participation as Friends, ambassadors and volunteers, in collaboration with the Arboretum team, has added significantly to the positive experiences of more than 400,000 visitors since the Arboretum opened in February this year. Many thanks to each and every one of you.

Over this last quarter, the Arboretum has begun to settle into its new role—and so have we. Now that we are beginning to understand how the Arboretum will operate, we are able to plan how the Friends can best contribute to the Arboretum, during the coming year, and into the future. This will be reflected in our new business plan and budget for 2014.

During 2013, we passed the point of having 1500 memberships, representing several thousand actual members within the different membership categories. We provided the Arboretum with a fire trailer as a Centenary gift. This was an item that the Arboretum identified as needing most at this time, and you can see it travelling around the site with the Friends' logo proudly displayed. We trained a total of 200 guides (for general tours and specialist bonsai guides), and provided more than a thousand guided tours to visitors. We continued to monitor tree growth and this program earned some international recognition when Dr Roger Hnatiuk of the Friends and Dr Cris Brack of the ANU presented a paper at an international conference in New Zealand, about their collaborative work in developing sampling strategies for assessing tree growth at the Arboretum. We introduced week-day working bees and have been assisting the Arboretum to replace dead trees and remove tree guards where they are no longer needed. The Frogwatch team continued its work and discovered that the Burrowing Spotted Frog, Neobatrachus sudellii (rare in the ACT), is at the Arboretum. The Friends assisted at numerous events and introduced a new winter event called Warm Trees. In fact during 2013, more than 500 Friends' volunteers have been involved with the Arboretum in one way or another. We have so many members who give their time unstintingly—you are all amazing!

We now have membership cards because of discounts being negotiated and a Friends' parking pass is available at a special price. Remember that December is membership renewal month, so please ensure that your membership is current. If you go to page 11, you will find that you can now renew memberships threeyearly and five-yearly, as well as annually.

With all this comes the need to thank all the members of Council, particularly Colette Mackay, our excellent Secretary, and Linda Muldoon who has created another annual calendar (an essential fund-raiser) and Linda is currently working with a small team on an update of the Arboretum book about the forest species. This time it will include all the forest species (a few of which have yet to be planted), and will be published during 2014. We could not have achieved so much for our members and the Arboretum without the efforts of our dedicated Council members.

Next year we will be working with the Arboretum team to promote the Arboretum in various ways, through events, Friends' initiatives, and through seeking funds from non-government sources. I look forward to going on this adventure with you.

See you at the Arboretum! Jocelyn Plovits Chair

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# Catching up in the Friends Forest

### BY LINDA MULDOON

This year the Friends' end of year function moved to the seclusion of the Friends Forest at the southern end of the Arboretum. Now that the Arboretum is open to the public and the barbecue area in the Himalayan cedars has been discovered, we realised we would not have the area to ourselves, or even be able to park close-by.

Therefore the decision was taken to locate the festivities down south in Forest 100 and we had the area all to ourselves, except for the occasional cyclist or horserider passing by. Also, at one stage, the black cattle grazing in the pine forest on the other side of the fence suddenly discovered us and staged a rather frenzied procession.

Anyway, like the trees we watch growing, we have to be a bit adaptable regarding location, and fifty-or-so of us met up with Friends, many of which we regard as real friends that we hadn't seen for a while.



Above: There were many choices re what to nibble

Below: The group photo, this time with some of the drooping she-oaks we planted in July 2010 towering in the background



Many Friends just catching up

Members were also able to check on the extra trees planted in this forest earlier this year and most were doing very well.

But there was also work to do. This forest is planted in a pattern that has two circular spaces around single trees (to a Glossy Black Cockatoo, they would look like two

Jocelyn's son Nicholas and wife Tabitha were the sausage sizzle chefs (they married on Dairy Farmers Hill 12 months ago!)





large eyes. A decision had been made with Arboretum management that any 'garden' element in Forest 100 would be confined to these two areas and Adam Burgess had suggested that we try planting them with kangaroo grass. A segment of one circle had been prepared as a trial and all attendees were handed an envelope of seeds to scatter—a different Christmas Party activity for sure! The mood was convivial and the weather was kind, with just enough breeze to keep away those pesky little flies that the cattle have attracted.



Our Secretary, Colette Mackay, with other Friends

Vice President, Trish Keller, with Patron, John Mackay





## SPECIAL THANKS

Reprinted from the latest Frogwatch newsletter

Roger and four other Friends have been instrumental in monitoring a number of sites at the Arboretum on a weekly basis throughout spring. Thanks to their regular site visits, we now have lovely recordings of the Spotted Burrowing Frog (*Neobatrachus sudellii*), which is not often heard in the ACT. This species was detected in mid-September after heavy rain falls at two of the Arboretum sites. Well done!!!

A summary of the results are now available on the Frogwatch website: www.ginninderralandcare.org.au Click through: Frogwatch/census, then scroll down to any of four sites (NAD011, NAD034, NAD036 or NAS100); click on the site and the observations will open.

### REMEMBER

December is the month for membership renewals—see page 13 for new options

# Another encore for 'Voices in the Forest'

### BY LINDA MULDOON

As usual, the Village Building Company (major sponsor) and the organisers had a nerve-wracking time with wet weather in the days leading up to the concert, but as in the previous two years, the gods were kind on the day —Saturday, 23 November. Around 4500 people attended the concert, which is the largest audience at a 'Voices' concert to date. Unfortunately Yvonne Kenny broke her ankle in London and could not appear. Greta

Robyn Archer performed several numbers in act 1, demonstating her wit and versatility, and ending with some world-class cabaret.



Bradman, a young Australian soprano, took over her role at short notice and sang beautifully.

The other soprano, Emma Matthews, just gave it her all. She was all sweetness and light one minute and scheming and conniving the next—and even took to the bottle in the final act.

The tenor, Rosario La Spina, also gave some stirring performances and his delivery of *Nessun Dorma* earned him a standing ovation.



Greta Bradman who took on Yvonne Kenny's role at short notice.

Once again Alex Sloan of 666 ABC did a wonderful job as MC. A number of Friends volunteered, and helped to make the day run smoothly. Children were entertained in the Margaret Whitlam Pavilion. Because there was a

The drama queen: just two of the many faces of Emma Matthews.





Emma—all sweetness and light Rosario in a solo



The magpies did some singing in the interval, prior to act 3

\$20 charge for a parking voucher, most people pooled cars or came by bus and this meant that even though there were more people, there were less traffic problems than in previous years. Some people stayed for an afterconcert buffet in the Village Centre and this would have

A happy crowd in the sunshine during the first interval





Rosario and Emma in a duet



The Grand Finale with all the star performers, ably supported by the Voices in the Forest Orchestra, the Oriana Chorale and the Voices in the Forest Youth Choir.

eased the problem of everyone trying to leave at once. Wonderful weather (though it did get unexpectedly cold), wonderful singing and music and a wonderful setting—another triumph for 'Voices in the Forest'.

#### NATIONAL TIMBER DESIGN AWARDS

The National Arboretum Canberra Village Centre won four top awards at a ceremony held in Melbourne on 20 September 2013.

Excellence in Timber Design Award (public or commercial buildings)

Best in the Central Region (ACT and NSW)

Excellence in the Use of Timber Products (Australian Certified Timber)

Excellence in the Use of Timber Products (Engineered Timber Products)

Congratulations to the architects (Tonkin Zulaikha Greer), structural engineers (AWT and Jim Grandy), Tasmanian carpenters and suppliers (Vos Constructions and Tasmanian Timber Engineering), and local carpenters (D+J Carpentry)

# Indonesia's Vice President plants a tree

#### BY LINDA MULDOON

On 12 November 2013, **His Excellency Professor Dr Boediono. Vice President of the Republic of Indonesia**, and **Madam Herawati Boediono** joined Shane Rattenbury MLA, Minister for Territory and Municipal Services, for a ceremonial tree planting in the Arboretum's Central Valley. A large party of Indonesian officials and their media attended the ceremony to watch Professor Dr Boediono and his wife plant a *Phyllanthus emblica* (kemloko,Indian gooseberry, amalaki) tree.

This is a small to medium-sized deciduous tree with attractive pealing bark and feathery leaves. It is widely cultivated for its fruits throughout its natural distribution range which extends from India southeastwards through many countries, including Indonesia. The roundish, light-green fruits are about 2 cm in diameter and they are of great importance in Asiatic medicine. Medical research is also assessing the fruit's many potential therapeutic properties.



Professor Dr Boediono (in the blue suit) with Madam Herawati Boediono and Shane Rattenbury MLA (far left), arriving at the ceremony.



Planting the tree and watering it in. PHOTOS BY LINDA MULDOON



# Working bees

Through the year we moved from having sessions once every two months to sessions twice a week. Thank you very much to everyone who donated their time and energy, and took up the challenge of doing everything from weeding in the nursery and around the dam, to replacing trees, removing hundreds of tree covers, and even rock picking.

It all adds significantly to the development of the Arboretum and I know they are most grateful for the assistance. All the Arboretum Team involved especially appreciated the good will and collegiality of all the volunteers.

I have found working bee activities very satisfying—especially having the opportunity to get close to the forests and see them developing. I am sure that the South Esk pines and the Japanese snowbells really appreciated being freed from the tree guards that were constraining them in this rapid growth period. And when we removed the tree guards from the Paraná pines, we discovered that their reputation for being spiky was very well deserved.

We will be working out the 2014 program of working bees with the Arboretum Team and sending out the details in the new year.

Many thanks to the Arboretum Team: Jason, Adam, Owen, Peter, Mitch and Tony—who made us feel so welcome and really valued our involvement.

Looking forward to seeing you at the Arboretum working bees in 2014.

Season's Greetings

**Jocelyn** Chair

# Westbourne Woods (just around the corner)

### BY MAX BOURKE

Better known as the Royal Canberra Golf Club, the Westbourne Woods Arboretum offers members of the Friends an opportunity to see how quite a few of the National Arboretum species may look when mature.

The Westbourne Woods arboretum reflects the work of a long line of dedicated tree people in the ACT and in this Centenary Year the 'Tree Lagacy' left by Charles Weston, Lindsay Pryor, Max Jacobs, Robert Boden and Ken Eldridge, needs to be acknowledged.

Charles Weston, known locally as 'Charlie', was born in England in 1866 and died in Australia in 1935. In 1911 he was asked to advise on the plantings for the new Federal Capital while still the Superintendent of the State Nursery at Campbelltown. He took up the position as Officer-in-Charge of Afforestation Branch of the Federal Capital on 1May 1913. He was faced with the formidable task of determining what to plant in this tough environment of cold frosty valleys, hot dry summers, ancient soils—and rabbits!

On 5 May 1913, he chose the site for large-scale testing of some of the potential species for the public and private domains of the new capital. His site of 160 hectares was used to establish a nursery (still Yarralumla Nursery), while most of the area became the arboretum of Westbourne Woods for testing species. Some four months later, Walter Burley Griffin arrived on the scene.

While the early plantings were mostly conifers, more variety was introduced between 1917 and 1920, and by the end of that period nearly 45,000 trees had been planted. The name Westbourne Woods is probably derived from the Westbourne Circuit in Griffin's plans.

Weston retired in 1926 and was awarded the MBE by the Duke of York the day after the Duke had officiated at the opening of Federal Parliament in May 1927. By then the new buildings of the Australian Forestry School had been opened on a neighbouring site, under the direction of Charles Lane-Poole, and students used the trees of Westbourne Woods as part of their studies for many decades.

Max Jacobs, a distinguished forester, succeeded Lane-Poole and suggested relocating the then Canberra Golf Course to this site, and in 1945 a design that retained most of the trees was laid out. In 1949, Lyndsay Pryor, then Superintendent of Parks and Gardens, undertook some work to prepare the fairways and to replant with appropriate species to complement existing plantings, but major golfing developments didn't get underway until 1960. Recently the experience of those involved in planning the National Arboretum Canberra has been used to assist the Royal Canberra Golf Club with a new planting program for the site.



The stone pines at the entry to the Royal Canberra Golf Club were planted between 1914 and 1918. The same species can be found in Forest 56 at the National Arboretum Canberra.

PHOTO BY LINDA MULDOON

The Friends of ACT Trees (FACTT, formerly FACTA), a body which is affiliated with the Friends of the National Arboretum Canberra, run free walks at Westbourne Woods on the second Sunday of each month, commencing at 9:30 am. The meeting point is the entrance to the Royal Canberra Golf Club and each month a different guide gives a different perspective on the trees, so it is well worth going several times.

*Westbourne Woods*, an excellent publication from which some of this text has been derived, is available from the Arboretum shop at the Village Centre and the ANBG Bookshop for \$20.

The same species found at Westbourne Woods and at the the National Arboretum Canberra include:

Horse chestnut, drooping she-oak, bunya pine, silver birch. kurrajong, pecan, southern catalpa, Himalayan cedar, Moroccan cypress, pencil pine, western Queensland white gum, small-leaved gum, Wallangara white gum, red ironbark, silky oak, Japanese crepe myrtle, oriental sweet gum, Osage orange, white cedar, Persian ironwood, Aleppo pine, stone pine, radiata pine, Cedros Island pine/ Guadalupe Island pine, oriental plane, callery pear, mesa oak, pin oak (though not 'Freefall'), Engliskh oak, cork oak, soap bark tree, giant sequoia, kowhai, Montezuma cypress, Wollemi pine, Japanese zelkova.

### TREES IN FOCUS

# **Cornus kousa** JAPANESE FLOWERING DOGWOOD

BY LINDA MULDOON

The Friends helped replace dead trees in this forest a few weeks back, so we are taking a look at how the trees in Forest 8 are likely to develop.

This year the flowering in Forest 8 was quite spectacular and gave some hint of what we can expect to see in the years ahead. This forest contains both Cornus kousa var. kousa (from Japan and Korea) and Cornus kousa var. chinensis (from China) and after several visits to take photos, I became aware that we have considerable diversity among these trees, particularly in relation to the size, colour, and shape of the flowers.

This is a small, rounded, deciduous tree in the Cornaceae family: height 10 m, spread 7 m. The older bark sheds, creating a mix of grey-tan and mahoganybrown, so as they mature, their trunks will make them an attractive tree in winter. Deep-green elliptical leaves, 4-7 cm long, are located on opposite sides of the stems. Adult trees are extremely showy when in bloom in late October. The flowers, 3–5 cm in diameter, have what appear to be four white or cream petals but these are actually bracts that open beneath a cluster of inconspicuous green-grey flowers. The fruits are pink to red round berries, 2-3 cm in diameter. In May, the tree





#### Buds in early October







Tree growing in Longwood Gardens, Pennsylvania, United States PHOTO BY HENRYHARTLEY en.wikipedia

Below: Some of our young trees flowered for the first time in 2012 PHOTO BY ADAM BURGESS



provides a wonderful autumn display when the leaves turn a brilliant pinky-red. The species is native to Japan, Korea and China where it grows in fertile conditions in sparse, mixed or dense woodlands at elevations of 400-2200 m.

It is not a threatened species in its native habitats, but has proven to be resistant to 'dogwood anthracnose', which is a fungal disease that has decimated many populations of Cornus species in the United States.

Below: Just four of the many different flower types PHOTOS BY AUTHOR







Above: Fruits forming on the Arboretum trees in December 2013 Below: Ripening fruits at Bodnant Garden in Wales PHOTO BY VELELA en.wikipedia

*Cornus kousa* may therefore prove to be an important species in terms of the survival of the genus.

While the skin of the fruit is rather tough and bitter, the pulp inside is edible to humans and very popular with birds. The fruit has also been used to make wine and tea.

Forest 8 was planted in September 2009 and the larger trees date back to then. Trees of this species reach mature height in 20 to 25 years. The planting pattern forms a series of interlocking hexagons and a large central hexagon is marked by a path through the forest. This species is widely used in horticulture and many cultivars have been developed:

'Ben Fuji' has deep the deepest reddish-pink bracts;

'Elizabeth Lustgarten' and 'Lustgarten Weeping' are both noted for their weeping habits;

'Gold Star' has leaves which feature a splash of gold down the centre and the stems tend to be reddish;

'Little Beauty' is a small, densely-branched cultivar;

'Milky Way' has very prolific flowering (the pure white bracts can conceal the foliage), and this is followed by heavy fruiting;

'Satomi' and 'Rosabella' have bright pink bracts in the right climatic conditions and the colour can vary from year to year;

'**Snowboy**' has grey-green leaves edged in white, with some white splashes in other parts, but it is slowgrowing and best sited in the shade to avoid scorching the leaves;

'Summer Stars' is a taller tree with a vase shape and smaller, but longer-lasting, bracts;

'**Temple Jewel'** is a variegated form with leaves that show a marbling of green, gold and light pink, but sometimes leaves turn to green in maturity;

'Variegata' is a form with varying degrees of white or gold variegation; and

'Wolf Eyes' is a variegated form that has uniform white margins that are often very wavy and they translate to an attractive colour in autumn.



Trees near the Himalayan cedars were planted in September 2009.

Japanese flowering dogwood's pinky-red autumn colour was on show at the Arboretum in mid-May 2010



PHOTOS BY AUTHOR UNLESS OTHERWISE STATED

REFERENCES Missouri Botanical Garden en.wikipedia www.hort.uconn.edu

# Arboretum Frogwatch report

Frogwatch has completed about three years and nine months of observations at the Arboretum. These have been done quarterly, except for a set of weekly observations during spring 2013. The latter set was our response to the Regional Frogwatch Co-ordinator's request for earlier observations to check on whether there had been a shift in peak calling to about one month earlier than in previous years (ie, mid-September instead of mid-October).

The special spring observations this year produced a most unexpected set of records. The little-known Burrowing Spotted Frog (*Neobatrachus sudellii*) was heard at both the new Larch Dam and the old Cork Oak Dam during early September. This was during and after a period of heavy rain; an event that is often associated with hearing this frog call. Clearly, when rain is sufficient to deeply wet the surface soil, the frog is able to emerge and breed before burrowing underground waiting for the next deep soaking event.

With nearly four years of observations, it is becoming possible to make some early generalisations about frog activity at the Arboretum. As these are still early days in observing the frogs' breeding seasons and species present, changes could be expected as more time passes.

Spring (late August, September, October, November) is the peak season for calling by *Crinia parinsignifera* (Plains Froglet) and *Uperolea laevigata* (Smooth Toadlet). The Common Eastern Froglet (*Crinia signifera*) also peaks in spring, but has also been recorded in June and December.

*Limnodynastes tasmaniensis* (Spotted Grass Frog) is one of the very common species and has been recorded calling at most times except in the dead cold of winder in late June and July.

The species preferring warmer weather appear to be *Litoria peronii* (Peron's Tree Frog) in October and December and *Litoria verreauxii* (Whistling Tree Frog) in December and March.

The uncommon *Neobatrachus sudellii* (Burrowing Spotted Frog) has only been recorded in September after heavy rain. More observations following heavy rains at other times of year are still needed to see how much season affects calling after heavy rains.

As always, the help of the six or seven volunteers on recording nights, and the verification of records by the Frogwatch Co-ordinator are all important in making these observations of the diversity of the developing Arboretum possible. Thanks to all of you for your help and to the Arboretum management for access to the site after dark.

#### **Roger Hnatiuk** Project Leader

Fioject Leader

December 2013

#### MEMBERS-ONLY WALK

We send our congratulations to Max Bourke for organising and leading the first members-only walk on 15 September. This walk travelled through areas not usually seen by visitors, and provided a fantastic insight into some of the more remote forests in our amazing growing Arboretum.

There were 20 people on the walk—a comfortable number for such a group. Max was ably assisted by Roger Hnatiuk and the wonderful provender Margie Bourke, who provided morning tea.

Following the success of this outing, Max proposes to hold a similar walk in the autumn. Watch for the announcements in the Newsletter and on our website.

Many thanks again to Max—Jocelyn



Photo by Max. The other Friends are listening to Roger sharing his knowledge of less-visited parts of the Arboretum.

# FOREST TALK





### FIRST CONES ON THE YUNNAN CYPRESS

We are still seeing plenty of 'firsts' at this stage in the Arboretum's development and it is particularly exciting when it is a threatened species such as this one.

### FIRST FRUITS IN THE TAIWANESE TRIDENT MAPLES

We have just a small patch of these rare trees within the host forest, so it is good to see them progressing.



## **BIRDS NEST IN FOREST 40**

We discovered the nest below during a routine tree measuring session in October and our friends at the Canberra Ornithologists Group identified it (from the photo) as a Yellow-rumped Thornbill's nest. They nest in the bottom domeshaped nest, but build a cup on top to fool predators. Later in the month we found another similar nest in a hoop pine in the Central Valley.



# NEW EXECUTIVE FOR STEP

The photo at right shows the new executive for the Southern Tablelands Ecosystems Park. From left to right: Tony Lawson (Sec.), Margie Bourke (Pres.), David Shorthouse (Deputy Pres.), Andy Russell (Treas.), Bill Handke and Judy Smith (Comm. members). *Right: Thursday morning tea for the workers every week—new folk welcome.* 

## **THEY'RE BACK!**

There were no known sightings of Bird-dropping Spiders in 2012, but there have been several in the latter part of 2013. Your editor spotted these egg-sacs (left) while photographing eastern red buds in Forest 70 in September. You can see the tiny spiders suspended on a line of web at the bottom of the photo. Then in late November, I found two young females, about 6 mm wide (and looking like bird-droppings) on a Yunnan cypress down south in Forest 95. Others have reported sightings too.



### FREEING THE SOUTH ESK PINES

30 October was one of many working bees. Here the Friends were removing tree guards on a steep site, just down from Dairy Farmers Hill. These Tasmanian trees are doing well and had filled the tree guards, making them into triangular-shaped trees for a while.



# Membership application form

Please complete the form below *OR* go to **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)				
Email address				
Do you agree to receiving notices of meetings via email?				

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

Please circle your relevant membership category/parking voucher request:

Single	1 year \$35	3 years \$95	5 years \$155
Household	1 year \$40	3 years \$110	5 years \$180
Concession	1 year \$20	3 years \$55	5 years \$90
Association or Club	1 year \$60	3 years \$160	5 years \$270
Corporate Friend	1 year \$2000	3 years \$5400	5 years \$9000

Friends' annual parking voucher \$25 Reg. no. .....

Please circle your method of payment: **Cash Cheque Direct deposit** (cheques must be made payable to the Friends of the National Arboretum Canberra Inc.)

#### PLEASE NOTE THAT ALL RENEWALS ARE DUE IN DECEMBER

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 or via our website on 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, *Web Manager* 

COUNCIL MEMBERS Linda Muldoon, *Publications Editor* Caitrin Dunn

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 McArdle-English Roger Hnatiuk

HONORARY MEMBER Jon Stanhope

## Newsletter

The newsletter is published quarterly. Please contact Linda Muldoon on **lindaon@grapevine.com.au** if you would like to contribute an article.

The Friends thank the ACT Government, ActewAGL, Supabarn and Yarralumla Nursery for their support.

Information prepared by the Friends of the National Arboretum Canberra Inc. December 2013







