



**FRIENDS** of the National Arboretum Canberra

## **NEWSLETTER**

ISSUE 42 MARCH 2019



*Director of the National Arboretum, Scott Saddler with Chair of the Friends, Trish Keller, OAM beside the new, coloured, laser cut National Arboretum logo at the front entry. The logo is made from aluminium sheeting with a mill finish..*

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Dear Friends

Happy New Year....2019 now in its third month!

The Friends volunteers are clocking up the hours already...thank you for the wonderful work you do in whatever capacity!

Our congratulations to Scott Saddler, now confirmed as Director of the National Arboretum Canberra. We are very pleased that he will be able to move forward in the role he's been acting in for quite some time and continue nurturing his strategic vision and direction of the Arboretum well in to the future.

Scott brings with him a wealth of knowledge and experience. As you know he has considerable strengths in collaborating meaningfully and fostering relationships with the strategic partners of the Arboretum and in our case...the Friends. His commitment to effectively engaging with and sharing the dialogue with the Friends is much appreciated. We all enjoy his strong, inimitable communication style and interpersonal skills.

Our next General Meeting on Tuesday 12 March will be followed directly by Guest Speaker, Ms Kate Auty, ACT Commissioner for Sustainability and the Environment. She will address us on 'Environmental reporting- communicating the science to a general public'. A gold coin donation is appreciated.

While we are on the topic of the Environment, Max Bourke, AM and Dr Roger Hnatiuk will represent us before the Legislative Assembly Standing Committee on their magnificent submission 'Nature in our City'. This paper is on our website if you haven't read it yet! We have been allocated a 15 minute timeframe between 3-5pm on Wednesday 10 April.

Our Friends ZIG 19 Garden will have the plaque unveiled and officially launched on Thursday 28 March at approximately 11.00am. We hope you will be able to attend this momentous occasion! Prior to our launch will be a similar ceremony for 2 other gardens. We are celebrating by having champagne and nibbles to mark the event at the site. If you need a buggy ride down to Zig 19 please let me know and the NAC staff will assist you.

As mentioned in newsletters last year, the Friends Strategic Plan will have its first meeting prior to next Council in a dedicated 9-30am -12noon meeting on Wednesday 6 March. John Hemphill, who has had years of experience in leading teams in this area, will be our Facilitator. Thank you, John.

We are fortunate in having the NAC's Strategic Vision and Business Plan 2017-2022 to be our guide and as we all know that our *raison d'être* is to support the NAC. We will keep it simple and the document will reflect on what we do now. It has been said the key to our success is a very close working relationship with the NAC, keeping in step with them and continuing to building a strong partnership.

Another message of congratulations must go to the NAC for hosting the recent Australian of the Year ceremony. What a wonderful evening it was from my vantage point on the couch! Apparently there are many visitors now coming to the NAC so they can see where all the action took place. To have one of our very own ACT locals, Dr Sue Packer, AM, chosen as Senior Australian of the Year was icing on the cake. Dr Packer's lifetime work has been as a paediatrician and working to protect and enhance the rights of children. Sue was appointed a Member of the Order of Australia in January 1999 'for service to child welfare, to paediatric medicine and to the community'.

See you at the Arboretum,

Trish Keller OAM

Chair



## Friends of the National Arboretum Canberra Inc

### Zig Zag garden 19 FUNDRAISER

Contribute to our \$50,000 target and watch your garden grow.

[www.arboretumcanberra.org.au/support-us/donate](http://www.arboretumcanberra.org.au/support-us/donate)



## Scott's Update



New uniforms for Visitor Services staff were launched in January. The new shirts incorporate an artwork designed by Aboriginal artist Krystal Hurst, which was inspired by the elements and space of the National Arboretum Canberra.

January 2019 saw 211 school students visiting with half participating in facilitated programs. The Arboretum hosted two visits from the National Youth Science Forum which is a program managed by the Australian National University and Rotary for students heading into Year 12 who are interested in a future career in science. During their visit here they were facilitated by Cris Brack and Roger Hnatiuk who shared their knowledge on science and research at the Arboretum.

The Australian of the Year Awards on the 25 January 2019 gave the National Arboretum Canberra national exposure with a live broadcast by ABC at the Village Centre.



Last year our volunteers engaged almost 10,000 visitors, conducting over 2000 walks and talks throughout the Arboretum and encouraging our visitors to discover and explore our collection.

The announcement of 12 km of new tracks and trails at the National Arboretum generated many positive articles and comments. Positive media coverage also included the National Arboretum as a school holiday destination.

Thanks to event sponsorship from the Friends, our popular *#beesinthetrees* series of workshops have continued to run this year. Bee-friendly Gardens, Bee-behaviour for Kids, and Beyond Honey were held over January and early February and were all sold out.



Working Bee volunteers returned to their duties at the end of January, continuing with the fertilising project. Approximately 10 tonnes of the 15 tonnes of fertilizer have been successfully spread over approximately 17,000 trees.

Gallery of Gardens completion – The final gardens in the Gallery of Gardens, Gift of Life and Terra Australis Gardens, have now been completed. These gardens have put on significant growth, and are looking healthy, with regular positive public comment about the look and feel of both gardens.

The National Arboretum Canberra (10,100 followers) and the National Bonsai and Penjing Collection (5700 followers) Facebook pages continue to get high reach and engagement levels generating positive comments. The Instagram account is growing steadily each week (423 followers) and user generated content is being shared.

*Scott Saddler,*

*Director, National Arboretum Canberra*

# National Bonsai and Penjing Collection (NBPCA) of Australia

by Mike Woolley

While recovering from the hottest January on record, NBPCA members are busy preparing to present another great week of bonsai activities. Bonsai Week is a great opportunity to showcase the NBPCA to overseas artists and to share information on techniques and current directions in the art.

This year Bonsai Week celebrates “Women in Bonsai” with internationally renowned artists Heike van Gunst and Sandra Grlica from Germany joining us for a week of events, workshops and tours.

## Bonsai Week

Monday 25 - Sunday 31 March 2019

## International Guest Artists

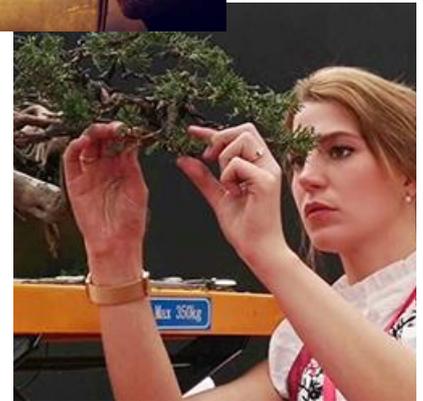
### Heike van Gunst

Heike has styled and grown bonsai since she was 15. She is an avid contributor among the bonsai community in Germany and founded the Bonsai-Arbeitskreis Hamburg & Umland Club in 2007. Since 2015 Heike has been the Chief Editor of the German *Bonsai Art* magazine. She also writes articles for the German *Bonsai-Fachforum* and regularly acts as a translator for international bonsai artists.



### Sandra Grlica

Sandra has been a bonsai artist for the past 15 years. She has been involved in many events and bonsai shows throughout Europe, and represented Germany at the Ruago Penjing show in China. Sandra studied under the bonsai master Mauro Stemberger.



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## Bonsai week events

### Bonsai Demonstrations

March 25, 26, 27 10:30—11:30am

Our guest international artists explain and demonstrate the art of bonsai.

### Guided Tours with Leigh Taafe, Curator of the Collection

March 25, 26, 27, 28, 30, 31 1:00—1:30pm

Demonstrations and tours are free, and no booking is required.

## Beginner bonsai workshops

March 25, 26, 27 2:00—3:30pm

Learn the essentials of creating, styling and maintaining bonsai and take home your own potted bonsai. \$85pp includes all materials.

## Discussion forum and critique

March 29 1:30 –3:30pm

International guest artists Heike van Gunst and NBPCA curator Leigh Taafe will discuss a range of topics and welcome audience questions. \$10.00pp. Bookings essential.

## Bonsai after hours—Women in bonsai

March 29 05:30pm

This is the premier event of Bonsai Week 2019. It will feature simultaneous demonstrations by Heike van Gunst and Sandra Grlica from Germany. See the experts transform raw materials into bonsai masterpieces, then have a chance to bid on the trees and other items at auctions throughout the evening.

Mingle with bonsai enthusiasts, meet the guest artists, enjoy the sunset and see the National Bonsai and Penjing Collection of Australia under lights. Cash bar will be open.

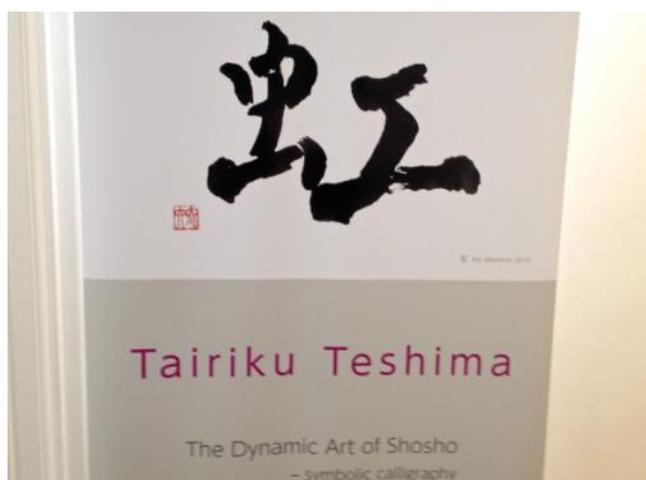
Tickets \$65, bookings essential. Tickets include canapes and a drink on arrival

## Contemporary Japanese calligraphy exhibition "One", by Tairiku Teshima,

March 8 - 31 9:00am – 4:00pm

This exhibition showcases a modern form of symbolic calligraphy called *shōsho* – a dynamic modern art that uses limited characters and brushstrokes.

Most of the 28 ink on paper works have been specially created for this exhibition.



## FRIENDS DISCOUNT!

There is a 10% discount for all Bonsai Week paid events for Friends of the National Arboretum.

When booking on line, use the promotional code **BonsaiWeek2019** then press apply (screen shot 1).

Bonsai Week 2019: Beginner Bonsai Workshops  
Monday, 25 March 2019 from 2:00 PM to 3:30 PM

### 1 Select Tickets

Tickets	Price	Fee**	Quantity	Cost
25 March - Beginner Bonsai Workshop	\$85.00	\$3.50	1	\$88.50
26 March - Beginner Bonsai Workshop	\$85.00	\$3.50	0	-
27 March - Beginner Bonsai Workshop	\$85.00	\$3.50	0	-

Promotional code  
Enter your code first, then select your tickets and quantity

BonsaiWeek2019

APPLY

Payment Total \$88.50

Once apply has been clicked the discounted price will be applied (screen shot 2)

Tickets	Price	Fee**	Quantity	Cost
25 March - Beginner Bonsai Workshop	\$85.00 \$76.50	\$3.50	1	\$80.00
26 March - Beginner Bonsai Workshop	\$85.00 \$76.50	\$3.50	0	-
27 March - Beginner Bonsai Workshop	\$85.00 \$76.50	\$3.50	0	-

Payment Total

\$80.00

\*\* Fee is calculated using Credit Card payment method.

\*\* Ticket prices may vary slightly based on the payment method selected at checkout.

BUY TICKETS

## Harvest Group News

Dedicated members of the Friends' Harvest Group have been busy harvesting and processing produce to sell at the next two scheduled market stalls at the National Arboretum. The first is to be held on 16 March 2019 and the second on 4 May 2019, both commencing at 10 am and finishing at 12.00 noon.

The productive Discovery Kitchen Garden has provided the tomatoes, eggplants, parsley and a variety of basil to be made into delicious relish, chutney and pesto.

Figs from the forest have been harvested and made into the popularly delectable jam, dried figs, chutney and also into something new, fig paste.

From the Sensory Garden, English lavender has been harvested, dried and put into beautifully coloured organza bags to fill drawers, wardrobes, rooms and cars with irresistible scent. A lavender bag placed under the pillow will give a great night's sleep. The lavender can also be used to flavour biscuits, cakes and icecream.

Also from the Sensory Garden, there is dried chocolate mint to make deliciously soothing tea, or it can be used to deodorise cupboards, rooms and cars. The scent is invigorating!

All this wonderful produce has been grown naturally without the use of chemicals or pesticides. The proceeds from market stall sales go towards Arboretum projects. So come along, invite your friends and support our wonderful Arboretum.



## Harvest Group Market Stalls

**Dates:** 16 March 2019 and 4 May 2019

**Time:** 10 am to 12 noon

**Location:** National Arboretum Entrance (or inside the Visitor's Centre if the weather is inclement)



## Keeping in STEP

At the time of writing I am much relieved that the horrendous days of extreme heat appear to be behind us. The dryness continues to be a concern even though we have had some sporadic falls of rain. A slow and steady soaking would be at the top of our wish list.

The new shed project is very exciting. I would like to extend sincere thanks to all who were able to give donations to help us with the fit-out of the shed and allow for more projects later in the year. The Arboretum has been very generous in its support of the shed construction also. Thanks must go to Terry Murphy, Bill Handke and Ross Dalton (Treasurer) for their work in bringing this project to fruition. Soon we will have a "Fair Dinkum" shed at Forest 20. The concrete work is complete and the shed is due to be put up in a few days' time.

In addition to our usual activities, David Shorthouse has been very busy furthering our contact with CIT and promoting STEP as an "in the field" learning space for a range of CIT courses.

Scott Saddler has had several visits to STEP this month. He came to see the concrete pour and has also planted an *Acacia pycnantha* to replace one he planted two years ago. That tree was badly damaged by a hare nibbling on the stem. When we informed Scott of its demise, we suggested it was "hare today, gone tomorrow".

*Judy Smith*  
(President STEP)

*Scott Saddler planting a replacement Acacia pycnantha.*



*(above) and helping with concreting (right)*

## Shed project - underway



*Second truck-load of concrete*



*Sue Genner, David Shorthouse, Lainie Shorthouse, Matt Parker, Operations Manager NAC, Scott Saddler, Director NAC*



*Almost there!*



# TREES IN FOCUS

## *Araucaria bidwillii*

### Bunya Pine

The Arboretum has a number of living fossils in its collection. Among them is the Bunya pine which comes from the ancient family of coniferous trees, *Araucariaceae* which grew across the world in the Jurassic period. Many of its "cousins" are extinct. The remaining members of the family are spread across the former landmasses of Gondwana, particularly South America, New Zealand, Malaysia and New Caledonia, as well as Australia, and includes the Wollemi pine (*Wollemia nobilis*) and the Monkey puzzle tree (*Araucaria araucana*) covered in our last issue.

Take a stroll southward along River Road and Totara Road to visit this relic of the Jurassic era in Forest 71. You may also find the two ceremonial trees planted by Glen McGrath from the McGrath Foundation. These trees marked the creation of 'Plant Pink Friendship', a partner

ship between the McGrath Foundation and Global Land Repair which will raise funds for specialist breast care nurses to support women who have been diagnosed with breast cancer.

#### Origin of the species name

*Araucaria* is derived from the South American tribe name *Aracanos*; *bidwillii* is named after John Carne Bidwill, who brought a live specimen back to England in the mid 1800s.

#### Distribution:

Bunyas used to be much more widespread than they are now. Today they grow in the wild in only a few locations in southeast and north Queensland. One such area, the Bunya Mountains, is the remains of an old shield volcano – about 30 million years old, with peaks rising to more than 1,100 metres. The Bunya pines grow in fertile basalt soils in this cool and moist mountain environment

## Bunya Pine

Botanical name: *Araucaria bidwillii*  
Family: *Araucariaceae*

Bunya pines can produce dozens of massive cones that can weight up to 10 kilograms, which can drop from up to 50 metres without warning.



Height: 20 to 50 m



Bunya Pine cone



Cone seeds

The seed in the Bunya cone is a delicious and nutritious food.

The tree is particularly valued as 'tonewood' for producing string instrument sound.

The Conversation 

## Stand well back!

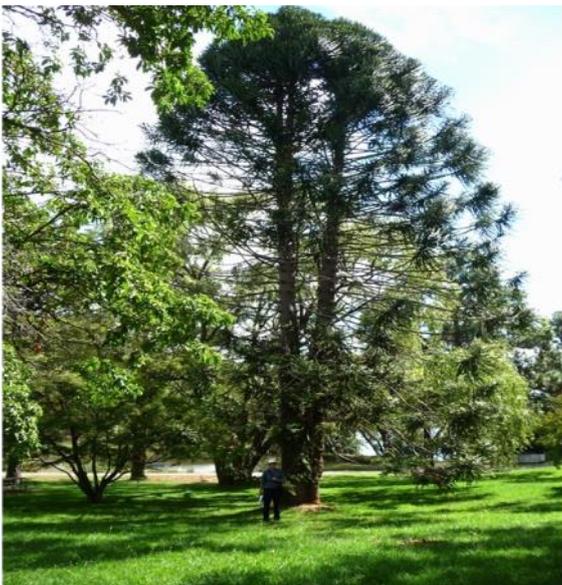
While many people love Bunya pines, this love affair comes with a health warning. They are best regarded with both distance and respect!

The trees are big and typically range from 20m to 50m in height. Their leaves have strings of very rigid and sharply pointed leaves. If you come into physical contact with its leaves or branches, you must wear protective clothes and carefully handle them to avoid pain or even cuts.



Sharp, lance-shaped foliage. Photo: Jan Morgan

But this is nothing compared to this tree's ability to hit you on the head, possibly with serious consequences. When in season (generally December to March) they can produce dozens of massive female cones weighing up to 10 kilograms. These can drop from up to 50m without warning. Less threatening male cones form on the same



Mature Bunya pine in Weston park showing the distinctive conical shape. Photo: Jan Morgan



## Indigenous use

The cultural connection of the Bunya pine to Aboriginal Australians is very powerful. The Bunya Mountains in southeast Queensland used to host massive gatherings of Aboriginal groups.

People came to visit the Bunya pines and feasted on the nuts in their abundant cones. Some travelled from hundreds of kilometres away, and traditional hostilities were dropped to allow access. The seed in the Bunya cone is a delicious and nutritious food, a famous and celebrated example of Australian bush tucker.

Colonial authorities recognised the importance of the Bunya, and in 1842 Governor Gipps issued a Crown decree protecting all native stands from logging. This might well be the first example in Australia of protection of native flora because of its cultural significance

Unfortunately the decree was rescinded in 1860 and the trees were heavily logged for timber.

Even those European timber pioneers realised the significance of the Bunya Mountains area, and the Bunya Mountains National Park was declared in 1908, creating Queensland's second national park. Today, Bunya saw logs come from plantations only, as they are protected in their national park wild habitat, and once again there are Bunya festivals celebrating Aboriginal cultures and history.

## Sources: '

*The Conversation*" with permission under creative commons

The Gymnosperm database  
[https://www.conifers.org/ar/Araucaria\\_bidwillii.php](https://www.conifers.org/ar/Araucaria_bidwillii.php)

Jan Morgan for information from U3A Trees of the Arboretum course

## Tales from the US Autumn Tour, October 2018

From early October to early November, a group of Arboretum Friends headed to eastern USA to look at trees. We learned a lot of things. I know I did. Like not to put prescription skin cream in the same bag as your toothpaste. Let me tell you, toothpaste doesn't rub in all that well.

We came to appreciate, too, the truth of the words "in the midst of life we are in death". And not just during our rural cemetery visits, as magnificent as they were (Mount Auburn, for example). For amongst the mighty trees and forests, we saw the handiwork of silent killers.

One was the **hemlock woolly adelgid** (*Adelges tsugae*).



Many of the wild and not so wild places we strolled through evidenced dead and dying eastern hemlock trees (*Tsuga canadensis*). Arborists we met were having to make the heartbreaking decision of which hemlocks to save because, mostly, they wouldn't be able to save them all. Unmolested, the eastern hemlock can live for over 800 years. It is an important tree to forest ecosystems and provides protection for wildlife. But the hemlock woolly adelgid can apparently kill a host tree within four years. It does so by sucking plant nutrients out of the tree, causing loss of the tree's needles and mortality of branch and bud tips, which are necessary for regeneration.

The main treatment we heard about was chemical, applied through stem injections, but apparently soil drenching, foliar sprays or soil injections are also used. Silvicultural methods are also an option, such as opening the canopy to sunlight in summer. But these have to be carefully managed to mitigate against unintended consequences, such as to wildlife habitat and water quality. Chemical treatments can also have consequences, of course. One forester we met as we walked through a forest said they were worried it might be killing bees. Biological control is reported to be promising in the long-term, and research is also afoot to find a strain of hemlock resistant to the adelgid. Interestingly, the hemlock woolly adelgid is native to western USA (as well as Asia), so eyes naturally turned that way to see if one of the natural controls in the west could be reestablished in eastern USA. Fingers crossed, then, that a solution can be found.

Another forest killer was the **emerald ash borer** (*Agrilus planipennis*). It has apparently killed millions of ash trees in the USA. One source notes that since emerald ash borer was first detected in the USA, in 2002, over 53 million ash trees (*Fraxinus spp.*) are believed to have died! And that a simulation study found that, by 2019, the cost of treatment, removal and replacement of infested ash trees on developed land would be about US\$10.7 billion. Fortunately, an Emerald Ash Borer Science Advisory Panel has been established in the USA to try and slow this massacre. Movement restrictions of infested material, such as firewood, is a major element of the fight back program. Biological and chemical controls are also being researched.



Occasionally, amidst the gloom, there is a lighter side, if your sense of humour leans towards the macabre. As our little group was trolling along in South Carolina, mouths dropped open in horror! Noses pressed against the windows of the bus. What is that vine suffocating everything along the road in a living shroud, from native trees to lamp posts, we clamoured? (Whole abandoned homesteads aren't safe either, apparently.) A sort of *'Invasion the Body Snatchers'* for trees and anything that can't run away. It was the kudzu (*Pueraria montana*), we learned, a native of Asia. Shaken, I researched this alien pest when I got home. And what interesting reading it was.



of

Kudzu, I learned, was introduced to the USA in 1876 as an ornamental vine. In the 1930s and 40s, the US Government actually paid farmers \$8 an acre to plant it in some southern states as an erosion control measure. It was also planted as a forage crop, though less successfully. But it can completely replace existing vegetation once it gets going, smothering it with a dense canopy that little light can penetrate. Sadly, kudzu is also present in Australia, in Queensland and parts of NSW.

Where's the lighter side I can hear you asking. Well, in researching this post I came across an article in the Smithsonian online magazine. A story about how the kudzu can sometimes not be as hardy as it seems. And how it has become synonymous with the southern USA experience. Referred to in literature to invoke hopelessness, southerners have fought back with kudzu literary festivals and kudzu branded eating establishments. Intrigued I looked up some poems about kudzu and found a whole passel of them. Here's a line from my favourite, provided on that website.

*"Kudzu sallies into the gully  
like a man pulling up a chair to a table  
where a woman was happily dining alone..."*

Joking aside, the take home message for me is that biosecurity matters. Invasive pests and pathogens, sometimes in combination with the effect of global warming, are threatening the world's trees and forests. At the local level, home gardeners can do their bit by keeping their gardens free of pests, weeds and diseases, and by buying plants and seeds locally. On a global scale, botanic gardens and arboreta are being enlisted as sentinel sites as part of the International Plant Sentinel Network (IPSN). As part of the network, they provide an early warning system to detect, and even identify, harmful pests and diseases.

To quote Friend Mary's new cap, purchased on the trip, *'May the forest be with you'*.

*Laurel, a Friend of the Arboretum*

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See Biosecurity Matters, *Gardening*, [www.agriculture.gov.au](http://www.agriculture.gov.au)

See [www.plantsentinel.org](http://www.plantsentinel.org)

## How to join the Friends

Visit [arboretumcanberra.org.au](http://arboretumcanberra.org.au) to join online or to find out more about the benefits of being a member

OR

Email your details to: [contact@arboretumcanberra.org.au](mailto:contact@arboretumcanberra.org.au) and pay by funds transfer or cheque

OR

### Complete the Application Form and mail it to:

The Secretary, Friends of the National Arboretum Canberra, PO Box 48, Campbell, ACT 2612, and pay by funds transfer or cheque.

- Bank details for funds transfer:**  
Westpac, Petrie Plaza, Canberra, ACT: BSB 032 719.  
Account: 375379 – please include surname in description.
- Cheques payable to:** Friends of the National Arboretum Canberra Inc.

Membership type	1 year	2 years
<input type="checkbox"/> Individual	\$45	\$80
<input type="checkbox"/> Household	\$55	\$100
<input type="checkbox"/> Concession	\$25	\$40
<input type="checkbox"/> Club/Association*	\$100	\$180
<input type="checkbox"/> Business*	\$500	\$900

\* Please see website for details



## Membership Application Form

Membership type: .....

Title: ..... First name: .....

Last name: .....

OR

Club/Association/Business name: .....

Address: .....

.....

..... State: ..... P/code:.....

Email address for newsletter and updates:

.....

Phone: ..... Mobile: .....

Number of parking passes: .....

Total amount payable (include membership/s and parking pass amounts): \$ .....

Signature: .....

Date: .....

### Parking Pass 1 year

- Friends' Annual Parking Pass \$27.50 per vehicle (2018)  
\$28 per vehicle (2019)

For a parking pass, please include your vehicle's registration number. ....

**Note:** An Individual Member is entitled to apply for one Parking Pass at the Friends' discounted rate and a Household Member is entitled to apply for two Parking Passes at the Friends' discounted rate.

Please note: This page may be photocopied

