



FRIENDS of the National Arboretum Canberra

NEWSLETTER Issue 54 March 2022

Welcome to Autumn! And Welcome to new Friends!
And a huge congratulations to the 2021 NAC Volunteer Award winners...



Jocelyn Plovits is our Volunteer of the Year for 2021 ! The award acknowledges Jocelyn’s outstanding work at the Arboretum, including guiding the development and publication of the original and updated Friends Arboretum Book, and running the Warm Trees celebration since 2013. A mammoth effort and we are so very grateful to Jocelyn. All award winners are listed inside!



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Chair's Report

Dear Friends

Greetings! I look forward to seeing many of you at the launch of the Forest Shelter (the first of the NAC Gazebos) on site, on Tuesday evening, 6-7 pm 8 March.

The work is complete and the edifice looks magnificent with exactly what the prospectus advertised - stunning views across the site and beyond, as well as meeting the physical needs of our outdoor visitors, locals and groups. The interpretative signage is colourful, creative and informative and the Friends have a permanent sponsor's acknowledgement panel.

Thank you to all of you who contributed to this magnificent project. The Arboretum is now part of every Canberran's 'backyard' and this forest shelter is an investment for the future for every resident who chooses to come this way.

Huge congratulations to the NAC for winning the recent Tourist Attraction Award for the 2021 Canberra Region Tourism Awards announced in an online events ceremony! As Friends we can all feel very proud as our efforts, whatever activity we participate in to support the NAC, has helped contribute to this success.

The Chief Minister, Andrew Barr MLA, in his remarks when congratulating the winners, mentioned that those who had continued to pursue excellence and had demonstrated incredible resilience would be joining their tourism industry peers at the Australian Tourism Awards later in the year. We wish the National Arboretum Canberra every success in this final.



You will recall the at 2021 end of the year function and the awards presentation Chris Begley was awarded a Sterling Service Award. He was not present to receive it. However, just before Christmas it gave me great pleasure to present this award to Chris at a very small private ceremony near his home. I know he was thrilled to receive it for his years of service as one of the very early Guides.

I am looking forward to being back, driving the Ngala bus in March. The NAC are now offering 2 tours each weekend day, one after the other in the afternoons. And with the new upgraded road to the Cork Oaks, opportunities will be extended. The Deek's Drive Road upgrade is all but complete.

The Warm Trees 2022 Steering Committee has met a couple of times with the new Convenor, Jan Morgan, at the helm. We are really looking forward to working with our new partner this year, the Indigenous Marathon Foundation. It's not too early to get knitting. The launch is being planned for early in July.

The Harvest Group Market Day have 2 dates for your diary the first stall is Saturday 19 March and the other just in time for Mothers' Day, Saturday 7 May.



With Professor Tom Calma AO (Chancellor University of Canberra) I was very excited to announce the Jake Keller Scholarship Award winner, Tracey Johns for 2022 at our End of Year

celebration. The award is annual for an outstanding CIT horticultural student. Congratulations to Tracey and we look forward to seeing her work during 2022, building a sustainable garden of wetland plants on the western side of Dairy Farmers' Hill.



A personal thanks also to the Friends who worked with Jocelyn Plovits to produce the updated Arboretum Book. The full team is pictured below, awaiting the big reveal!



The Friends' Council meets each month with a full agenda and February's Council was no different. Council considered a paper proposing that the Friends establish within its existing Public Trust Fund a sub fund for the purpose of supporting scientific works which would utilise the resources of the NAC for furthering the knowledge about the Arboretum's trees

and associated biota. A proposal was forwarded to the NAC seeking comment and support for this proposal.

Council is in conversation with a couple of local businesses about how we might proceed with the Arboretum Oral History Project. This important project will focus on the stories and images of the Arboretum's development, and with people telling their stories. It's a work in progress. So much happening at the Arboretum! See you there soon!

Kind regards Trish
 Trish Keller OAM
 Chair Friends of the National Arboretum

Calendar Dates for 2022



A busy year already, with the Pod playground given a makeover! And remember to renew your membership!

Diary dates below:

- 8 March 6.00pm **Launch of the Friends Gazebo**
- 19 March **Harvest Stall**
- 24-26 March **Bonsai Reshaped**
- 30 April **Canberra Tree Week** starts
- 5 May **National Arboretum Ambassador Evening Launch**
- 7 May **Mother's Day Harvest Stall**
- 10 May 5.30pm Friends' **AGM** and Guest Speaker: Trevor Lipscombe
- 4 July (week commencing) **Launch of Warm Trees**
- 12 July 12.30pm **General Meeting and Seasonal Talk**
- 13 September 5.30pm **General Meeting and Seasonal Talk**
- 8 November 5.30pm **General Meeting and Seasonal Talk**
- December TBC **End of Year Event: Thank You to Volunteers & Friends**

The **NAC's Forest Sculpture Gallery Launch** will also take place – date TBC

03
22

B R Whether you're an established bonsai artist or just starting out, join us at **Bonsai Reshaped**.

O E

N S Internationally renowned artists share their experiences, influences and perspectives to encourage you to reflect on your bonsai journey, inspire and shape your future.

S H

A A

I P

- Bonsai After Dark
- Workshops
- Markets

E

D

Promo code: BR-MAR22

Congratulations to the 2021 National Arboretum Volunteer Award Winners!

| Volunteer of the Year | Citation |
|--|--|
| Jocelyn Plovits | In addition to establishing the Warm Trees event and ensuring its success from the helm for 7 years, Jocelyn has coordinated the production of the second edition of the Arboretum Book, as well as doing a significant portion of the writing herself. Just one of these projects involves a great deal of energy and commitment, such is Jocelyn's skill and dedication that she completed these iconic projects concurrently. |
| Sterling Service | Citation |
| Michael Maher Working Bees | Michael attends both working bees with incredible consistency. He sets a high standard for the work to be done, and completes with attention to detail and a supportive attitude |
| Jennie Widdowson STEP/Mapping/Guiding | Jennie has contributed a great deal in transitioning STEP data from hard copy records onto digital mapping, and has further extended into mapping the Discovery Gardens to improve access to information for Guides and Visitors |
| Denyse Lamontagne Mapping | Denyse's keen observation of the subtleties between Eucalyptus species has made it possible to digitally map Forest 2 and paves the way for further learning, exploration, research and education |
| Chris Kemp Discovery Kitchen Garden | Chris has been a dedicated Kitchen Garden volunteer since 2017 and she regularly steps in to cover the duty roster. She is down-to-earth, dedicated and efficient and welcoming to all visitors |
| Max Bourke AM Guiding, STEP, Everything | Max has touched almost every aspect of the Arboretum, he is so very generous with his knowledge and can always be counted on to tell us an amazing story that connects us to nature and appreciate it all the more |
| Joanne Maples Guiding, book, mapping | Joanne's incredible contribution to the Arboretum is shown beyond the number of hours she spends volunteering, she contributes to all aspects of Guiding as well as many other projects. Joanne has contributed 193 hours this year so far |
| Des King Working Bee Coord | Desmond has been a working group volunteer coordinator for well over 5 years, he has an amazing record of getting things done and his attention |
| Helen Hemphill Guiding | In addition to being a warm and friendly face when people arrive at the Arboretum, Helen contributes to all aspects of Guiding and volunteered for 196 hours so far this year, the highest of any Guide |
| Chris Begley Guiding | Chris has been a committed and valued Arboretum Guide since the early construction days. This long term commitment is distinguished by Chris' ability to share his deep knowledge of the site and its history |
| Cheryl Oostermeyer Guiding | Outstanding commitment to improving visitors enjoyment of the Arboretum, including developing 3 Long Forest Walks, 2 of which were developed especially for children and families |
| Allan Read Bonsai | Allan volunteers rain or shine in the Collection every Tuesday and Sunday and has contributed 312 hours so far this year |

Discovery Kitchen Garden & Harvest Group Update

Article and photos: Ange McNeilly



Having written the December article in winter woolies and the heating on, this time it is with airconditioning and summer gear to cope with the above 30 degree temperatures and little to no rain over the past three weeks. There was a period where Kitchen Garden was battered by ferocious winds that had snapped tomatoes and pumpkin plants, crisp-dried the scarlet runner bean leaves and bent plant stakes!

A demonstration of just how resilient nature and plants can be, is the Charnwood Community Garden where I have a small plot and which was devastated by a severe hailstorm on 3 January 2022 that damaged homes and infrastructure in the area and downed many trees. Yet by mid-February, I was the beneficiary of other gardeners'

largesse whose crops had recovered and were producing copious amounts of squashes, cucumbers and zucchinis, but no tomatoes.



Over the past few months there has been a great deal of interest from people wanting to volunteer with the Harvest Group and to work in the garden. A big welcome is extended to new volunteers Juliette Roberts, Sylvia Pope, Madeline Piochaud and Jessica Cheng. Sadly, Martha and Tai Chin Woon have had to stop volunteering in the garden due to personal circumstances and we thank them and wish them well for the future.

Jessica Cheng (left) and Madeline Piochaud (right)



New volunteer Sylvia Pope (right) with Debbie Cameron and Danielle Hyndes



Friends of the NAC



In the garden, vegetables are not as productive as in previous years. While there are tomatoes, they are not ripening due to considerable fluctuations in temperature. Eggplants have not been growing well at all and some of the plants have made little growth despite the garden being fertilised at three-weekly intervals. Chillies have been producing well but are being picked by unknown persons. The strawberries have been fruiting well to the delight of visiting children. The most arresting plant at the moment is the pomegranate growing in the Dalek which is



covered in fruit whereas last year it only bore three or four. Also flowering well are the nasturtiums producing many seeds which will be packaged for sale and also sown for next year's display.



The English lavender in the Sensory Garden was harvested in early January, dried on shelves in the shed and stored in large sealed glass jars for later use.



On Wednesday, 23 February 2022, the Harvest Group met for the first time this year to discuss the signing of updated Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs); market stalls; stocktaking; procedures for food preservation; and funds contributed by the Harvest Group towards the new Forest Shelter.

Cally, Scott Saddler and the Arboretum were thanked for sourcing and paying for this year's preserving jars and for updating the SOPs which were signed by all volunteers present.

Two Market Stalls have been scheduled from **10.00 AM to 2.00PM for Saturday 19 March and Saturday 7 May 2022**. A stocktake of preserves confirmed there is plenty of product for the March Stall. A stocktake of seeds and dried herbs will also be done. It was decided to sell 2021 stock of 300ml jars for \$6 and 250ml jars for \$5. Deb Downes, Michelle McMahon and Cally Earnshaw were thanked for their assistance with Market Stalls.

The group went over procedures for making preserve to ensure that high quality standards and presentation were maintained. An update on the Wollemi project was provided regarding progress on preparations for the sale of the first 30 Wollemiis this autumn. **A big thank you to Michelle McMahon who will assist with the artwork for labels and publicity.**

Garden volunteers were thanked for their extraordinary work in making the garden look amazing as always.

For the fig harvest, there are currently 9 cooks and 10 pickers. A few more pickers and especially more cooks would greatly appreciated particularly if this year's harvest is a big one.

Thanks to Lynley Rees (Friends' Treasurer) for providing the spreadsheet showing the Harvest Group's income and expenditure for the last 14 months and a profit of \$12,373.11 for the period. This money, along with about half the funds raised by the Harvest Group for the previous year, make approximately \$16,000 that has been put towards the funding of the first Forest Shelter which will be launched on 8 March 2022. It is a significant contribution by the Harvest Group volunteers and demonstrates what our persistent efforts and contribution can achieve.

WOULD YOU LIKE TO HAVE YOUR OWN LIVING FOSSIL?

In the next few months under licence to sell to the public, the *Friends of the National Arboretum Canberra* will be offering the first 30 trees from the **FNAC Wollemi Pine Propagation Project**. Grown from seed collected from the **Arboretum's Wollemi Pine Forest** 32 trees here in Canberra under contract by the **Yarralumla Nursery**, these two-year-old trees can be electronically traced back to a specific tree in the forest.

All profits from the sale of these trees will support approved Arboretum projects.

Watch this space!



Chat with Cally

The new year is well underway, with a busy holiday season and a range of popular school holiday programs. We have welcomed many new volunteers to the team over the last couple of months, with new team members in the National Bonsai and Penjing Collection, Harvest Group, Discovery Kitchen Garden, Citizen Science and many more Arboretum activities. If you're interested in volunteering, please reach out to me via: ArboretumVolunteers@act.gov.au; we have many opportunities available which will support the Arboretum, its visitors and introduce you to a delightful team in a stunning setting.

The Ngala bus will be returning from Saturday 5 March, and we will be trialing new tour times: 1.00pm Wednesday to Sunday with a second tour available at 2.30pm on weekends and Monday public holidays. We are delighted to be once again offering our Guided Bus tours with the assistance of the Friends' Sponsored Ngala bus. You can book your place here: <https://bit.ly/3sspUAP>

During the Christmas break, the first ever Wattle Seed Harvest of Golden wattle, Australia's floral emblem was conducted at the Arboretum with the assistance of the National Wattle Day Association and some of our wonderful Volunteers. The trees in Golden Grove were planted just over 3 years ago in 2018 by a team of volunteers, some of whom were back to help us with the harvest. The wattle seed collected will be available for sale in the future, so that our visitors can take a little piece of the Arboretum home to their gardens. The wattle seeds become another line of produce made possible by the Harvest Group from the Arboretum's 100 forests and gardens that we are excited to make available to the community and tree-lovers alike. You'll have more on the way from the Harvest Group, with market stalls coming soon!



The Arboretum horticultural team is working with STEP volunteers to remediate the walking paths in Forest 20, and currently the site is not open to the public. Some of the public programs have moved to Forest 2 where visitors can utilise the new Cork Oak carpark.

Thank you to the Friends of the National Arboretum Canberra for their support, advocacy and skills, and another huge thanks to all of our wonderful volunteers who braved the heat and collected a bumper harvest of Golden wattle seeds over the Christmas break. A big thanks Dr Suzette Searle of the Wattle Day Association for her invaluable knowledge and her team of volunteers, and well as our volunteers from STEP, guides, forest working bees, the First Canberra Garden Club, ACT Cactus and Succulent Society volunteers, the

bonsai volunteer team and the productive Harvest Group. It is wonderful to see so many people back onsite!

Cally Earnshaw
Community
Engagement Officer



The Arboretum is a Tourism Attraction Award Winner!

The National Arboretum Canberra is proud to be announced as the winner of best Tourist Attraction at the 2021 Canberra Region Tourism Awards which recognises excellence and resilience in tourism.

Canberra's best in tourism were honoured in what was the first ever virtual Canberra Region Tourism Awards on 4 February 2022.

The National Arboretum Canberra would like to acknowledge the Friends of the Arboretum, dedicated volunteers, on site partners and visitors that make the National Arboretum Canberra what it is today.



“This is a huge achievement for such a young institution and we are very proud to be receiving the Tourist Attraction award for the 2021 Canberra Region Tourism Awards. We have a small but diverse team that strives for excellence every day. This would not be possible without the support of our stakeholders, tourists and the local community, we thank each and every one of you.”

Scott Saddler (Executive Branch Manager of the National Arboretum Canberra)



Keeping in STEP

It is with much sadness that I report that STEP will be closed to the public for some months.

Due to the excessive rain and two torrential downpours, paths have been considerably damaged to the point of creating a serious hazard to walkers.

Forest 20 has been fenced off with parawebbing and only STEP volunteers, NAC personnel and others directly involved with remediation are allowed entry.

Unfortunately, it is not only the paths which have been affected. Crushed granite, in places up to 20 cm deep, has washed from paths onto gardens burying many plants. Most of these will not survive.



We are facing considerable work to re-establish the gardens and the cost of plant replacement will also be a significant impost on our funds.



We have submitted a plan for the remediation and we are grateful to NAC administration and horticulture staff for putting up the fencing and for their involvement in the remediation process. In mid-February, Bill Handke and his STEP team met with hydrological engineers to determine what

needs to be done to solve these pressing water problems and repair the paths.

Prior to the second damaging rain event, a team of Friends volunteers came to STEP and helped with some weeding. Thank you – your efforts on our behalf are much appreciated. Despite the understandable frustration and sadness, the Thursday volunteers remain cheerful and optimistic and are putting in extra days each week to ensure the restoration work gets done as speedily as possible

Judy Smith
President STEP

Did you see the Agave bloom in the Discovery Garden?



Article from Trevor Rodgers, Cactus and Succulent Garden at the National Arboretum, Cactus and Succulent Society ACT and photos from Vicki Woolley

Agave geminiflora is known also by the common name of Twin-Flowered Agave. Geminiflora means twin-flowered. Its native habit is in an area called Nayarit in the country of Mexico.

It grows naturally at altitudes of 1000 to 1400 metres in oak woodlands. This area receives an annual average rainfall of 1000 mm. It grows well in half shade to full sun. It can take temperatures as low as -3 degrees and is very heat tolerant.

Like a lot of Agaves, once the flower spike has developed and the flowers progressively bloom going up the stem, unfortunately the mother plant then dies. Propagation is by suckers (these are rare) and by seed.

So, for those that have recently seen the flower spike, you are very privileged indeed!

The Curatoreum News and Picks

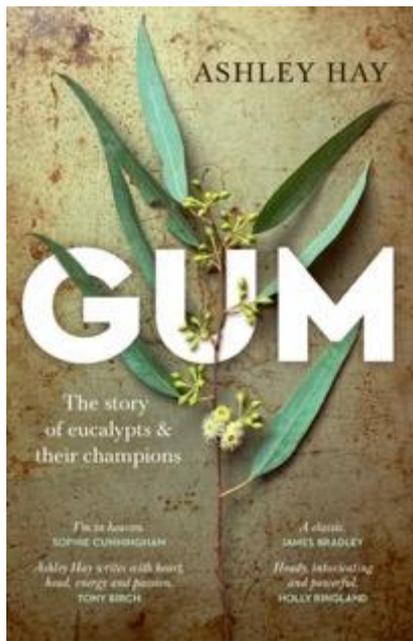
Autumn! My favourite time of the year at the Arboretum.

I love to watch the daily changes and colourful show that the forests put on for us. While all those falling leaves look spectacular on a grand scale, they remind me of all the tidying and raking I need to do in my own garden! Fortunately, we have a few handy tools in store to make this task a little easier. And after a hard day tidying it's time to put your feet up with a good book. Here are a few of our recent arrivals to see you through the autumn months.

Mel & the team at The Curatoreum



***Gum: The Story of Eucalypts & their Champions*, Ashley Hay.**



No matter where you look in Australia, you're more than likely to see a eucalyptus tree. Scrawny or majestic, smooth as pearl or rough as a pub brawl, they have defined a continent for thousands of years, and they continue to shape our imagination. First Nations Australians have long known the abilities of the eucalyptus. And as part of the raft of changes wrought by the arrival of colonial Australia, botanists have battled in a race to count, classify and own the species – a battle that has lasted more than two hundred years. *Gum: The Story of Eucalypts and Their Champions* is the story of that battle and of so many other eucalyptographers — explorers, poets, painters, foresters, conservationists, scientists (and engine drivers) — who have also been obsessed by these trees and who have championed their powers. This new edition of *Gum*, from award-winning author Ashley Hay, is a powerful and lyrical exploration of

these magical, mythical, medicinal trees, and the story of new worlds, curious people and big ideas.

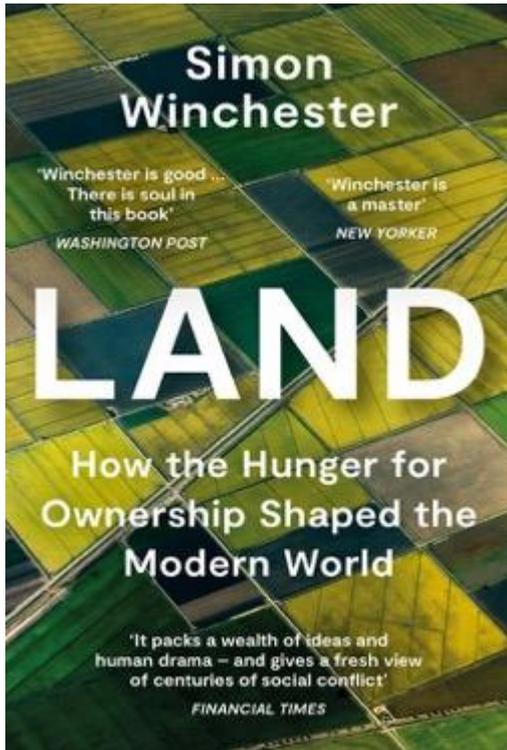
***Banksias – 2nd edition*, Alex George, Kevin Collins, Kathy Collins.**

Banksias are Australia's most iconic plants after Eucalypts - known for thousands of years to Australians and - through writing and art - to many more who have never visited this land. This extensively revised edition includes the most recently discovered Banksia, *vincentia*, with descriptions and illustrations of all 79 known species with many new photographs and updated species descriptions. It provides the history of their discovery, evolution, how to find and grow them and how they have inspired artists and artisans. With some 400 beautiful colour illustrations it is the comprehensive, up-to-date guide to these unique and fascinating plants. Tables list which Banksias to grow for particular purposes and the three authors have between them, studied and grown all 79 species of Banksia, their combined experience totaling over a hundred years.



***Land: How the Hunger for Ownership Shaped the Modern World*, Simon Winchester.**

From the bestselling author Simon Winchester, a human history of land around the world: who mapped it, owned it, stole it, cared for it, fought for it and gave it back.



The ownership of land has always been complicated, opaque, and more than a little anarchic when viewed from the outside. In this book, Simon Winchester explores the stewardship of land, the ways it is delineated and changes hands, the great disputes, and the questions of restoration - particularly in the light of climate change and colonialist reparation.

A global study, this is an exquisite exploration of what the ownership of land might really mean - not in dry-as-dust legal terms, but for the people who live on it.

New Products to help with Gardening!

Jute Leaf Sacks

Leaf Mold is a wonderful soil amendment, due to its water retention properties. Rather than adding leaves to your compost or piling unsightly and unsustainable plastic bags in the corner of your garden, try our reusable, biodegradable jute leaf sacks. Imported from England. \$17.50 Sold as a pair.



Twist Cultivator, Sophie Conran for Burgon and Ball

UK gardener, Sophie Conran has collaborated with Burgon & Ball to produce some of the most useful and beautiful tools on the market. This is a favourite here at The Curatoreum, as it makes clearing the dead flower beds and veggie patch a breeze.





Waxed Canvas, Carry All Bag

Constructed with superbly durable waxed canvas and built to endure. Made of thick 16 oz canvas, this is a bag that will be with you forever.

The waterproof canvas is just stiff enough for the bag to stand up on its own which helps when moving tools, cuttings and produce around the garden. It is an all-round handy bag to have in the home, garden, or car boot. Load it up, take it anywhere.

Thank you to all our Sponsors and Contributors:

If you have ideas for articles, or items that might be of interest to the Friends such as stories or photos from the Arboretum or further afield, please contact me Nicole Pietrucha on: pietruchanac1@gmail.com. Many thanks to the people who have contributed articles and photos for this and previous issues of the Newsletter, and given generously of your time to write, read and proofread. I could not do it without your help.



How to join the Friends

Visit 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 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 |

*Pensioners, health card holders & students

**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 \$35 per vehicle
Parking Pass

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' rate and a Household Member is entitled to apply for two Parking Passes at the Friends' rate.

Parking passes are issued for one year from the date of purchase.