



Friends of Bendigo Botanic Gardens Inc.

PRESIDENTS REPORT

November 2021 to August 2022

This has been the year that the Friends have almost been able to get back to pre-COVID normal. The Growing Friends have been able to continue to raise money for the gardens through their propagation and sales, the Gardening Friends have helped to keep the gardens attractive to visitors, the Illustrators have been able to gather indoors again one day a week, and the Tour Guides have been able to start taking groups around our beautiful gardens again.

In addition, the Friends have continued with one of their main purposes, lobbying on behalf of the gardens to promote the role of the gardens in educating and informing the general public about horticulture and plants. The Friends hope that this aspect of the gardens becomes more of a priority in the future.

This year we won an AAFBG Handbury Award in recognition of our “exceptional contribution of a member organization to its Botanic Garden”.

The Committee

President: Anne Bridley

Vice-President: Delene Commerford

Secretary: Pam Sheean

Treasurer: Ann Clark, Jan Bobin

Minute Secretary: Jan Bobin

Growing Friends Nursery Coordinator: Judy Milner

Growing Friends Garden Workers Coordinator: Ann Clark

Dovyalis Editor: Judy Milner

Committee Members: Anne Aston, Gerry Cox, Lindy Sloan, Deb Degenhardt, Lyn Wynn. Kirstie Paterson has attended as a representative of the City of Greater Bendigo.

Committee meetings were held in November and December 2021 and February, April, June, July and August 2022.

There were some changes on the committee during the year. Our long-term treasurer, Annie Clark, has resigned. I would like to thank her for her many years of able service. She is now our Membership Officer. Jan Bobin has taken over as Treasurer, while continuing to act as Minutes Secretary. Thank-you Jan. In addition, we welcomed three new members to our committee, Anne Aston, Deb Degenhardt, and Lyn Wynn.

This was my last year as president, and I would like to thank all those committee members who made it a pleasure to work with them over the last four years.

Membership

During the year 11 new members joined our group. The current membership is 88.

Finances

Our finances continue to be sound, and we currently have well over \$20,000 to spend for the benefit of the gardens. The amount that committee members are allowed to spend on expenses for the Friends without prior approval has recently been raised to \$150. No committee member receives any sort of payment for their service, except for reimbursement of invoiced expenses.

Donations to the Gardens

No donations were approved this year. Members are encouraged to suggest possible donations to the committee.

Growing Friends

Judy Milner has continued as our nursery coordinator, overseeing a group that has developed their skills as propagators under her guidance.

This year we moved from have our previous large sales in May and November to weekly Saturday morning sales supplemented by a small amount of selling on Tuesdays. This has proved to be very successful, and thousands of dollars have been raised for the gardens.

Gardening Friends

Annie Clark and Anne McKarney have organized the gardening friends as we weeded, pruned and mulched. We also take the opportunity to talk to the general public about the gardens.

Guiding: Walks and Talks

During the year Anne Aston, Anne Bridley, Gerry Cox, Judy Milner and Anthony Sheean have given talks or guided tours. Kirstie Paterson has been the main tour leader while the Friends train up new guides.

Botanical Illustrators

Covid restrictions on indoor gathering hit the Illustrators hard. Numbers are still down, and the group has not been able to resume the previous use of the Samuel Gadd Centre on Wednesdays. None the less, they continue to produce high quality work.

Dovyalis: Judy Milner has continued to be editor with assistance from Delene Commerford, Pam Sheean, Annie Clark and Eric Wilkinson. One edition has been produced since our last AGM.

Website: thanks to Bev Ormerod and Pam Sheean for keeping our website fresh and up to date.

Bendigo Botanic Gardens and Staff

The Friends have continued to work closely with Kirstie Paterson to help keep the gardens looking their best. Once the new plantings around the Central Hub are complete there will be even more for us to do. Thanks once again to Kirstie and her staff for all their hard work which is so much appreciated by visitors.

Special Resolution 2021 AGM and election frequency

At the last AGM a Special Resolution was passed to change our Rules of Incorporation to reflect our current practices: in particular, our practice of holding an election of committee members every two years. Due to an oversight on my part, I didn't send in the necessary paperwork to Consumer Affairs on time, with the result that the Special Resolution effectively lapsed.

After some investigation, it was found that the rules that the Friends approved in 2013 specified annual elections. These rules remain our club rules, and from now on we will be having annual elections unless the Friends decide otherwise.

I would like to end by thanking all our members who have supported the Group, and more importantly the gardens, by their interest and hard work.

Anne Bridley

31/8/2022