

THE FRIENDS OF THE WAITE ARBORETUM INC.



NEWSLETTER
NO. 16
WINTER 1998

Secretary
Mrs Anna Cox
8332 1482

Editor
Mrs Barbara Crompton
8379 6405

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Monday 27 April, 1998 at 8 pm.
Report by Barbara Crompton

Our speaker this evening was **David Lawry** on the subject of **TREENET**. He has spoken to us before about his work in producing advanced trees and his interest in extending the range of trees suitable for street plantings. The topic for this evening was a useful corollary and followed his observations of poor practice in the planting and care of trees in the public domain. He congratulated the Friends on their participation in TREENET activities. Whoever could reject a gratuitous pat on the back! More deserved was his tribute to Jennifer Gardner for her stewardship of the Arboretum and the value which it gives to arboriculture.

In February 1997 the first TREENET meeting was called. In addition to the Curator of the Waite Arboretum, it comprised staff from Urrbrae Agricultural High School, Local Government, State Government and the landscaping and nursery industries. In a short time the group has made an impact and I suspect that it owes much to the experienced guidance of the speaker who has been testing trees for a very long time. A number of Councils have responded to a TREENET questionnaire asking about the age profiles of their street trees, and about species which are successful, unsuccessful or planned to try and the reasons for these.

It is a tough world which street trees inhabit. David talked of that and of fashions and fads entertained by residents and about the drawbacks of some species. He recommended trees which have been little used in South Australia such as *Zelkova serrata*, *Eucalyptus leucoxyton* 'Euky Dwarf', *Flindersia* spp. *Geijera parviflora*, *Harpulia pendula* and *Angophora costata*.

This talk was pertinent to anyone who lives in an urban area and clearly there was enthusiasm for our own native trees. There has been resistance in some council areas to planting Australian trees but their great benefit lies in their ability to withstand drought and poor soils, especially if local indigenous species are chosen.

David asked for two or three volunteers to measure trees in the Arboretum regularly to assist in describing trees recommended for street planting, as height is all-important. Transport SA will fund measuring equipment and TREENET trials.

The members present asked many questions and I hope they influence their own Local Councils to take street trees very seriously. Certainly Burnside, Mitcham and Unley are open to suggestions. It was very helpful to listen to David and to see his very good slides. He was warmly thanked.

TRIBUTE TO OUR FIRST PRESIDENT

by Barbara Crompton

Tony Whitehill has recently resigned as a senior staff member of the Botanic Gardens of Adelaide and as first President of the Friends of the Waite Arboretum. As Tree Advisory Officer his work is very well known and respected and his services will doubtless not be ended with his employment at the Gardens. For us too, it is to be hoped that he will be not severing the ties and that we can enjoy his wisdom and depth of knowledge when he settles again to ordinary life after his extended overseas holiday.

Tony has guided the Committee very capably and as President chaired our meeting with charm and ease. It is a test of a good Chairperson to keep the audience unaware of hitches behind the scenes, like the cake having been forgotten or the slide projector not in place and he could always remain unfazed.

FROM THE COMMITTEE

Meeting on 3 June

- Office-bearers for 1998 are as follows: President - Roger Bungey; Vice-President - Cicely Bungey; Secretary - Anna Cox; Treasurer: Norma Lee; Assistant Secretary - Isabella Rawnsley; Assistant Treasurer - Mary Tester; Editor - Barbara Crompton.
- A new Committee Member, Marlene Lloyd, was welcomed to the last meeting. Marlene provides a happy link to the past as her grandfather and father were Fred Couzens, father and son about whom you may have read in the last Newsletter. They were, in succession, Head Gardeners from 1904 to 1966, firstly for Peter Waite then the Waite Institute.
- We have two projects offering for tender at present for which the Friends have allocated funds - paths in the Mallee Block and display cabinets for the Arboretum Room at Urrbrae House.
- Events being organised at present are a fundraising dinner for Sunday 20 September and an exhibition of botanical and zoological art "In Pursuit of Nature's Truths".

WHO ARE THE COMMITTEE?

This is a new section. Committee members have been asked to say a little about themselves and their interest in the Arboretum. Firstly we will introduce our new President Roger Bungey and then profile one of the inaugural committee.

Roger Bungey writes:

"The Waite Arboretum has a been a great source of interest and educational value over a long period of time. I first became aware of it in the late 1940s while a student studying forestry subjects at the Waite Institute. We spent time between lectures learning the names of trees and their identifying characteristics, also their growth performance in this climate. In the 1960s on returning to the Waite Institute to study Forest Entomology, I renewed my interest in the Arboretum not only to recognised the trees. but also the insects both harmful and beneficial that inhabit the trees. It is now very pleasing to be able to contribute in a small way to the well being of this wonderful educational and recreational arboretum."

Isabella Rawnsley is a Botanic Gardens Guide who volunteered to be among the inaugural guides at the Arboretum. It is evident that Isabella is not only an inspiring guide but also a wonderfully loyal worker for all the other tasks connected with the Friends. She writes :

"My father was a fruit grower on the River Murray. Our home was set next to a large area of uncleared mallee scrub and as a child I walked to school, about 4 km each day through further scrub lands. We lived in a sandy area and although water was always scarce, my father persevered with some West Australian eucalypts which he talked about *ad nauseam* I thought, as a teenager. While not aware of it then, I did develop a love for those beautiful mallee trees and of all the 'bush'. After that, Australian plants from deserts to rainforests became my passion. Now trees from all parts of the world are my interest. So I love being an Arboretum Guide and introducing visitors to the delights of the varied collection we have. It is most enjoyable to work on the Arboretum Committee and as a Guide with others who are so enthusiastic and knowledgeable about the world of trees."

'FOOD OF THE GODS Theobroma cacao'

by Anna Cox

Urrbrae House was packed on the morning of Sunday 14 June to hear David Symon talk about the history of chocolate and the ingredients which often accompany it, and Stuart Chandler, Marketing Manager of Haigh's Chocolates, on the chocolate-making process. We then filed out to sample chocolate as the Mayas used to drink it, the recipe having been translated into modern ingredients by the ever-resourceful Cate Paull. The morning raised \$1,200 which we thought very satisfactory. We are immensely grateful to the three people mentioned above, without whom we could not have held such a function, and to all those committee members and Friends and their families who helped make the day a success.

POSTSCRIPT

by Mary Tester

The sybarites who appreciated hearing about, and tasting, the "food of the gods", were given as they left a gift bag which included very special Amber Crystal sugar. This is especially imported into Adelaide by Haigh's. For 30 years, until it closed, Haigh's had a counter in George's exclusive store in Melbourne. Well-travelled customers often asked for this distinctive coffee sugar, so Haigh's began importing it, first from the U.K. and then from Belgium. Amber Crystal is unrefined sugar, very pure, and caramelised by a secret process - very expensive but appreciated by epicures. As one sips and stirs, sips and stirs one's coffee, the grains melt only slowly so luscious sugary lees are left for spooning up. Delicious!

SUNDAY WITH THE ARTISTS

by Mary Tester

On Sunday, 31 May, the Exhibition Committee invited the Artists who will exhibit in our Exhibition "In Pursuit of Nature's Truths" in November, and their families to morning coffee in Urrbrae House. Dr Laurie Haegi, whom we have invited to open the Exhibition and some of the Friends of the Arboretum Committee also came to meet the artists. We have not attempted this before but all agreed it was an excellent idea. Everyone mixed easily and artists who had not visited Urrbrae House before enjoyed inspecting the areas where their works will be hung. All expressed pleasure at being able to meet fellow artists. The dining room as usual looked most inviting with the open fire and the table attractively set including Cicely's freshly-made scones. Altogether a very pleasant way to spend a Sunday morning.

NEW MEMBERS

Welcome to: Ms Chris Bigwood, Eden Hills; Miss Mary Dowding, North Adelaide; Mr Alan Retallack, Torrens Park; Mrs Elizabeth Silsbury, Tusmore; and Ms Jill Woodlands, Brompton.

ARBORETUM NEWS FROM THE CURATOR

by Jennifer Gardner

New Plantings

Fifty trees and shrubs have been planted so far this year. They include 21 species of oaks - *Quercus phellos* donated by Jacinta Mirams, Vintage Tree Nursery, Woomargama, NSW, and *Q. libani* grown by David Symon. The rest of the oaks were some of the 33 species I bought back from Mereweather Arboretum in Dunkeld, Victoria where plant collector Bill Funk has assembled an astonishing collection of trees, especially oaks, from all over the world. Amongst the 33 species are the unusual *Q. oglethorpensis*, several species rare in cultivation e.g. *Q. michauxii*, *Q. boissieri* and *Q. alnifolia*, and some uncommon species with landscape merit e.g. *Q. vaseyana* and *Q. glaucooides*. Most of the new species should do well as they come from Mexico, Texas or the Mediterranean region.

More banksias were donated by the University's Dept of Horticulture; four more *Pyrus* species, grown from seed collected in Iran and Turkey were donated by David Symon; quandongs were donated by Perry's Fruit and Nut Nursery; sandalwoods *Santalum spicatum* were donated by Graham and Iris Herde, Nectarbrook Station via Port Augusta; and an advanced specimen of *Livistona australis* was donated by Mrs Carol Day, Coromandel Valley.

Native Vegetation Action Plan

Environmental consultant, Andrew Crompton, has prepared an Action Plan for the North West section of the Arboretum. The plan maps the existing native understorey which includes three species which are uncommon in the Southern Lofty Region, three which are rare, one which is vulnerable and one threatened species. There are also more than 25 herbaceous weed species. The Action Plan makes recommendations for restoring the understorey vegetation, establishing indigenous trees and shrubs, and maintaining the area. Careful hand weeding will be needed in the best areas. Anyone interested in the restoration and maintenance this special remnant of Black Forest flora should attend Andrew's forthcoming talk to the Friends on 10 August and find out how you can participate.

Volunteers needed

If you would like to actively contribute to the Arboretum and its activities, there are many ways you could assist including:

- Planting and tending trees
- Mapping and labelling
- Database management (flowering records, TREENET data)
- Word processing and general clerical help
- TREENET research

Any help you could give, even just a morning a week or a fortnight, would be much appreciated and I'm sure you would find the tasks and the company of other Arboretum enthusiasts both enjoyable and rewarding. Please contact me on 8303 7405 if you are interested.

IN THE ARBORETUM

by Mary Tester

EUCALYPTUS TETRAGONA (R. Br.) F. Muell. Myrtaceae Tallerack, Silver Marlock

The Esperance Plains stretch along the southern coast of Western Australia from Albany to the Great Australian Bight. They are a vast expanse of monotonous sand plains broken occasionally by granite outcrops and some quartzite ranges. The vegetation is known as Mallee-heath, so called because the tallest of the scattered shrubs consist mainly of small mallee eucalypts instead of Proteaceae. These are shorter and more scattered than in mallee proper which allows the heath understorey to be the dominant layer. The commonest of these mallee species is *Eucalyptus tetragona*.

The soils of the Plains are highly weathered sandy lateritic, probably Early or Middle Tertiary. *E. tetragona* grows mainly where this soil is poorest. The mallee-type growth is rambling, the branches slender and spreading with a densely-textured crown which rarely reaches 4 m in height, forming open clumps. The oval leaves are large, to 15 cm long, and broad for a eucalypt, and have a thick short stalk. They are rich in oil but this is of low quality. The fruit is 1.5 cm across and urn-shaped with enclosed valves. Like the leaves, stems and bark, the fruit is grey-white and glaucous, that is, thickly covered with a waxy silvery bloom.

'Tetragona' means four angles or sides. The stems, flower buds and fruit are four-sided, the operculum has, inside, four small tooth-like projections which may represent the vestiges of four petals which have become fused to form the bud-cap. In January and February, white or cream flowers develop in threes on a flattened, angular peduncle, the buds are 4-ribbed and the calyx 4-toothed.

In cultivation *E. tetragona* can be trained to be a bushy shrub becoming a very ornamental foliage plant which is frost hardy and suited to most soils. Most blue-leaved eucalypts suffer from insect attack but this species appears to have less damage.

Robert Brown in 1814 gave the generic name *Eudesmia* to *Eucalyptus tetragona*. He considered that this species with its striated opercula and distinct sepals alternating with bundles of stamens, unknown at the time in any other eucalypt, to be sufficiently different from *Eucalyptus* to belong to another genus linking *Eucalyptus* and *Angophora*. Later about 16 species were discovered ranging from mallees to tall trees. In 1864 Ferdinand von Mueller placed them in *Eucalyptus*. Several, but not all species of this group have stamens in bundles.

E. tetragona is shown on the Friends of the Arboretum postcard no. 3. There are two specimens growing in the Arboretum, one in the Mallee Block #1922A in K13 and another thriving specimen in the new eucalypt section #2514B in E5.

HELP FOR FRIENDS' ACTIVITIES

There is always a welcome to anyone who would like to meet others whilst assisting with mail outs, writing of your interests for the Newsletter, serving at meetings or functions and helping with Friends' database management, publicity and promotion activities. Please contact the Secretary Anna Cox if you would like to help.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS AND DIARY DATES

8 pm Monday 10 August. General Meeting at Urrbrae House. **Andrew Crompton** will speak on '**Conservation of the Black Forest**'.

7.30 pm Sunday 20 September. Special fundraising dinner featuring cuisine prepared by chef **Ann Oliver** with botanical commentary by **Dr David Symon**.

Woodgroup SA Annual Exhibition and Sale of Woodcraft. 20 Sept - 4 October. Their work is well known for its quality and value for money and we welcome them each year to Urrbrae House. Many of the items are made timber from Waite Arboretum.

6 ½ pm Monday 9 November. General Meeting will take the form of a guided walk through the recently established Urrbrae Wetlands, followed by light refreshments in the Arboretum.

11 am Sunday 15 November. **Opening of 'In Pursuit of Nature's Truths - An exhibition of recent botanical and zoological art'**. This exhibition by nine South Australian artists will be a major fundraiser for the Friends and will continue until 6 December.

Guided walks are taken on the first Sunday of every month. Meet at Urrbrae House at 11 am.

The Friends of The Waite Arboretum Inc.
Financial Statement for 1997

Bank balance at 31.12.97		\$28,673.24
less unrepresented cheques at 31.12.97		-278.00
Net assets forward from 1997		28,395.24

INCOME

Subscriptions	1,674.00	
Donations	276.40	
Tours	459.25	
Plant sales	78.00	
Publications	950.00	
B. Martin cards	1,295.00	
Arboretum cards	161.00	
Jewellery, scarves, pen	291.00	
Exhibitions: Wood Group	5,586.00	
: B. Martin & C. Wells	13,510.00	
Dinner- From the Orient	2,681.45	
Other paintings	445.00	
Miscellaneous (quince jelly, etc.)	270.15	
Bank interest	1,037.93	
Grant	10,000.00	38,715.18

EXPENDITURE

Tours	15.30	
Publications	460.00	
B. Martin cards	645.50	
Arboretum cards	2,290.00	
Jewellery, scarves	245.00	
Exhibitions: Wood Group	4,802.73	
: B. Martin & C. Wells	9,565.14	
Dinner- From the Orient	777.93	
Other painting	280.00	
Arboretum: Brochures, etc.	3,918.00	
: Pruning	1,440.00	
: Seats (donated '96)	2,100.00	
Invitations to Bot. Exhibn 11/96	185.00	
Friends newsletters, fliers	899.70	
Refreshments for meetings	83.50	
Stamps, stationery, 'phone	32.30	
Petty cash in hand	11.20	-27,751.30

Net assets forward to 1998 **\$39,359.12**

Represented by: balance in account, Commonwealth Bank	17,196.29	
Macquarie Bank	22,162.83	39,359.12

Mary Tester
Hon. Treasurer
4 February 1998

Auditor's Report:

In my opinion the above financial statement has been properly drawn up in accordance with the books and records submitted. I have obtained all the information and explanations required by me.

BJP Arnold
17 April 1998

