Jubaea

Friends of Geelong Botanic Gardens Inc. Newsletter

October 2026 Volume 26 Issue 3

FRIENDS OF GEELONG BOTANIC GARDENS



Denise Feldman - Honorary Life Member of the FGBG.

HONORARY LIFE MEMBERSHIP FOR DENISE FELDMAN

The Friends Committee nominated Denise Feldman for an Honorary Life Membership this year. This was confirmed at the Annual General Meeting on 31st August 2026.

Denise is a distinguished Botanic Artist, attending classes for about twenty-one years, and has been a member of the Friends from that time. She became part of the Botanic Art subcommittee in 2017. At our AGM on August 27th 2018, she was elected to the Friends Committee of Management and from the beginning was very active. She became one of our two vice presidents in 2019, and after three years, followed Allison Martland as our President in 2021.

Her three-year term of office could not have been more difficult. Firstly, there was COVID, when we could not volunteer otr meet in the Gardens. Denise was part of the finance sub-committee, which applied for several grants to help the Friends survive. We did, but it was tough.

In 2023, she was appointed by the Committee to act as a Mediator, successfully resolving a member issue, and this talent of hers was tested to the limit in 2023 and 2024.

She updated Botanic Art policies with Rossi Jablonsky and Pammi Pryor, and was part of a group meeting with the City of Greater Geelong to resolve a raft of issues during 2024 / 25.
She worked to develop the Friends' handbook, and was engaged with long negotiations between the Friends and CoGG with regard to the expanded Memorandum of Understanding, which contained significant change.

As President and beyond, Denise has been proactive in developing and promoting Occupational Health and Safety awareness, policies and procedures.

Denise's ability to identify issues and work towards resolution in a professional and empathetic manner has been a hallmark of her many roles in the Friends. Embracing and reaching out to people is one of Denise's most valuable strengths and many of us can fully attest to these skills.

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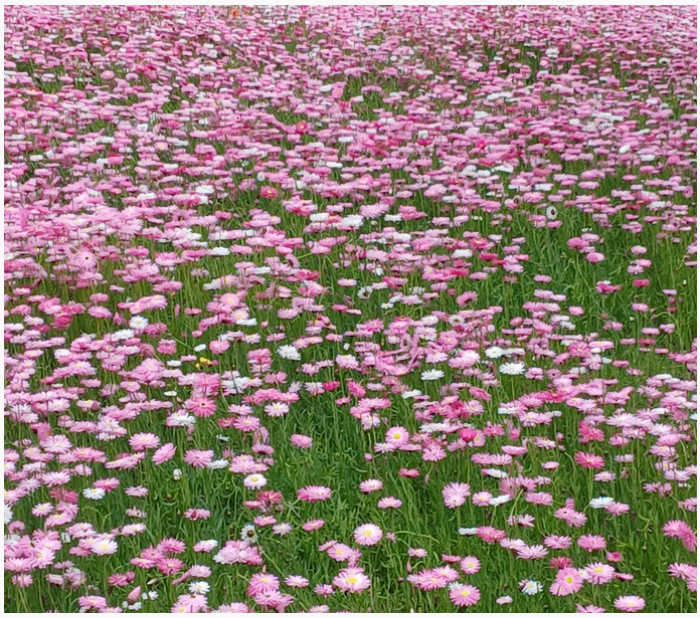
HONORARY LIFE MEMBERSHIP FOR DENISE FELDMAN CONT'D

As part of a small group unable to attend the Gardens from late 2024 through to early 2026, she joined with Allison Martland to coordinate our events from her home. Every one was a resounding success, always supported by her culinary skills. She was instrumental in helping make our 40th anniversary celebrations a great event and continues to contribute in so many ways. For years, every week, she has made a variety of gorgeous cakes for the Wednesday Morning Tea in the Meeting Room, her generosity and thoughtfulness in this always so much appreciated by all.

Congratulations, Denise!

She still co-ordinates Events with Allison, currently works in the Nursery expanding our plant identification signage, creates labels and learns about such things as potting up in her spare time. And she still cooks cakes for us! On Saturdays she is back at her beloved Botanic Art classes with John.

Luanne Thornton



Wildflower display 21st Century Garden October 2026
Photo; Anne Bourke

EXPLORING SOUTH AUSTRALIA'S MID NORTH

David Johnson reports on an excursion provided before the Guides Conference in Adelaide, October 2025.

Adelaide: The Centre of the oasis in an arid land

South Australia is the driest state in Australia, the majority of its people living close to the coast in the south or in the south-east corner. In the early days of European settlement, country to the north appeared to be adequately watered because they arrived just after one of the rare rainy periods. Those who moved north to farm were overtaken by the normal arid climate, and had to leave their land. Whole towns were virtually abandoned.

In 1865, the South Australian government asked the Surveyor-General, George Goyder, to identify country suited to agriculture. From horse-back, on a 3,200 km journey, he observed the native plants and vegetation and was eventually able to deduce the longer-term rainfall. He provided a map showing the areas suited to farming south of a line, soon called Goyder's Line. Areas to the north could, at times, trick settlers into taking up land when there had been good rainfall, but time has shown his line to be accurate. To recognise its importance, Goyder's Line became a National Trust of Australia Heritage Icon in 2003.

By comparing the map of Goyder's Line with satellite photos that identify vegetation, we can see that Goyder's Line on his map quite accurately reflects the vegetation growth and therefore the areas suitable for agriculture. The north pointing, thin finger of green corresponds with the rainfall triggered by moist air rising over the Flinders Ranges. Adelaide is near the centre of the eastern patch.



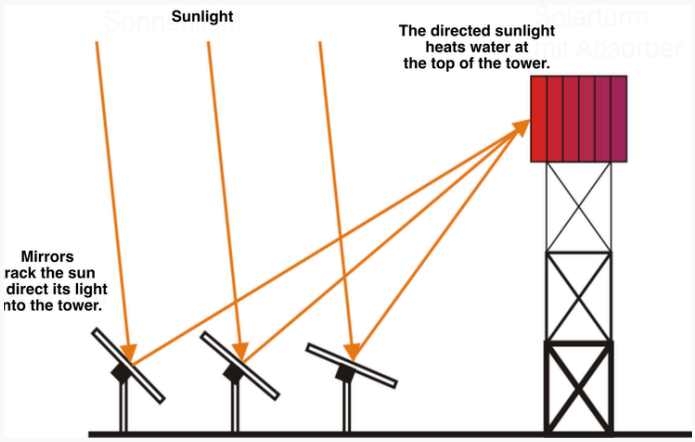
This map shows the approximate location of Goyder's line, Tentowo, Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.



Eastern South Australia Satellite Image: The green area on this satellite photo shows the areas suitable for agriculture, NASA, Wikipedia, Public domain.

An unlikely place for Australia's largest supplier of fresh tomatoes

Just south of Port Augusta, close to the northern end of Spencer Gulf, above Goyder's Line, so in very arid country, there is a strange white tower between the highway and gulf. In this place, called Sundrop Farms, they grow truss tomatoes that are sold in Coles Supermarkets around Australia, all year round. They supply 15% of Australia's tomatoes, all grown hydroponically.



Flat mirrors concentrate the sunlight onto the heating tower, RobbyBer, Wikimedia CC BY-SA 3.0

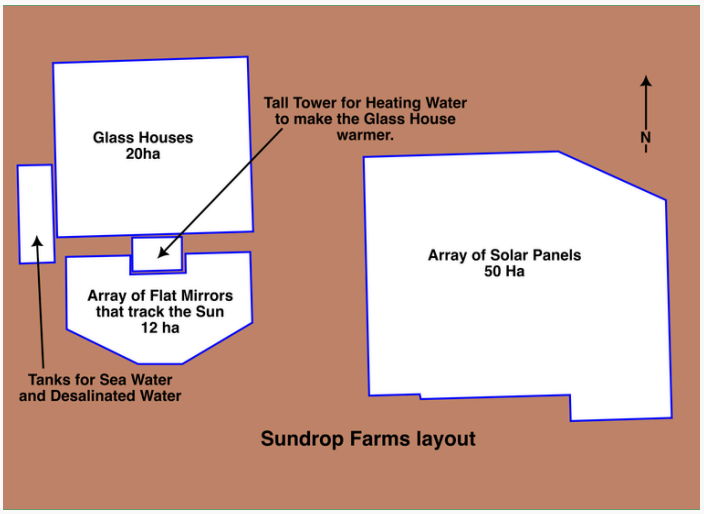
Plants need water, nutrients, light and the right temperature. A typical market garden buys in water and fertiliser. To grow plants in the cool seasons, they need a glasshouse and energy to heat the air. To grow plants in hot weather they need some cooling. Outdoors, the plants need to take whatever the season gives by way of rain, light and temperature, a chancy business. Sundrop Farm uses twenty hectares of glasshouses, buys sustainable fertiliser and takes free salt water from Spencer Gulf, just next door.

That white tower receives reflected sunlight from 24,000 mirrors, each moving to maximum effect, which provides power for pumping seawater and also for desalinating it, so that the plants have abundant, beautiful fresh water. The power also provides heating and cooling of the greenhouses across the seasons. Per square metre, this reliably produces astonishing quantities of tomatoes all year round.



The tower and hot water facilities stand out above solar panels and the glass houses.

Why did they decide to build Sundrop Farms at Port Augusta? It has all the things they need: plenty of sea water, very high levels of sunshine for much of the time, and the land is cheap because it is arid. The location is right on the highway where its huge number of B-triple delivery trucks can reach all capital cities with the 17,000 tons of fruit produced annually.



The parts of Sundrop Farms



Aerial photo of Sundrop farms before the solar panels were added, Mansouraboud68, Wikimedia CC BY-SA 4.0

EXPLORING SOUTH AUSTRALIA'S MID NORTH cont'd

Australian Arid Lands Botanic Garden, Port Augusta

This Botanic Garden, near the head of Spencer Gulf on the northern outskirts of Port Augusta, was officially opened in 1996, fifteen years after it was first proposed. It grows Australian plants that make the interior of Australia home. Around the now fully established gardens and visitors centre, the indigenous vegetation has been retained. The most significant original trees are Western Myall woodlands, *Acacia papyrocarpa.* Smaller indigenous plants include Black Bluebush, *Maireana pyramidata* and Frankenia Saltbush, *Atriplex ligulata*. The indigenous vegetation is supplemented with plants from all over our arid inland – focusing on the area that has 300mm or less average rainfall annually. Whereas rainfall in these arid areas is irregular, it is possible to see flowers that inland Australia is noted for in this Botanic Garden, as there is some use of irrigation.

On the border of the Arid Lands Botanic Garden, Grey Mangroves *Avicennia marina* thrive on the shoreline of the upper reaches of the Spencer Gulf, Australia's southerly mangroves. (Their most southerly site is Corner Inlet near Wilson's Promontory in Victoria.)

David Johnson



Arid Lands Botanic Garden, vegetation outside the cultivated area.



On the border of the Arid Lands Botanic Garden Grey Mangroves Avicennia marina thrive on the upper reaches of the Spencer Gulf. These are Australia's most southerly temperate mangroves.



Plants thrive at the Australian Arid Lands Botanic Garden, Port Augusta, with a little help from infrequent irrigation.

FGBG GIFT FUND

The Friends of Geelong Botanic Gardens Gift Fund is registered with the Australian Taxation Office to receive donations, which are tax-deductible. The Gift Fund currently has $420,766 The Fund may only be used to support special projects and programs within Geelong Botanic Gardens. It may not be used to support the Friends or Friends activities.

With distributions made this Financial Year so far:
$2160.00 for Heritage Tree Plaques, $325.50 for new Heritage Roses

The Friends of Geelong Botanic Gardens appreciate your generous donations to the Gift Fund and would like to thank you.

To make a donation: GIFT FUND online
Or contact the Friends' Office info@friendsgbg.org.au



WADAWURRUNG CONNECTION PROJECT

Over many years, Liz Bennetto has developed an understanding of our local First Nations people, the Wadawurrung, and their long association with the Geelong Botanic Gardens, beginning with our first Curator, Daniel Bunce, in the nineteenth century. This understanding developed into a passion to see better modern connections, particularly in the Gardens.

She put forward a proposal to the City of Greater Geelong, for which, in December 2022, $23,000 was awarded to the Friends as a First Nations Cultural Heritage Grant. The aim was to work collaboratively with the traditional owners in developing community awareness of Wadawurrung culture, with emphasis on their use of plants for food, medicine and materials, their conservation of resources and their methods of land care.

Community education could be further developed with enhancing established plantings, additional signage and walking trails. A large sign at the entrance to the Gardens would acknowledge the Wadawurrung, and interpretive signage would explain their use of plants. Guided walks would be held regularly, and self-guided walks would be made available on-line via the website, as well as being printed in hard copy. Celebrations of the project would be held with Wadawurrung and the general community.

Liz got to work, together with Corrina Eccles, a leader of the Wadawurrung, and other Wadawurrung Cultural and Language Officers, meeting with them and City representatives. Many hours were spent negotiating, explaining and developing relationships. Delays were caused by staff changes within the City, and concerns by the Wadawurrung with regard to cultural appropriation. This concern is very understandable, considering that First Nations' cultural knowledge has been shared with people who have subsequently gone on to make money and kudos out of it, without regard to those to whom it actually belongs.

The officers of CoGG Grants understood these frustrating issues, and more than once graciously permitted time extensions to the project. They also facilitated communication in the difficult fifteen months when Liz was unable to speak with any member of Gardens staff. Some plans had to be changed, but with strong support from Daniel Cornwell and Sheree Parker of the Gardens, much progress has taken place.

Plants in the Wadawurrung Resources Bed are doing well, with labels installed with their Wadawurrung, Botanical and Common names, and interpretive signage.

The naming has been a major task. The digital screen at the front gate has a slide acknowledging the Wadawurrung. It says: *Bengut Wadawurrung Dja-a*, Proudly on Wadawurrung Country. A fixed digital banner at the bottom of the screen is also being planned. All of this entailed extended consultation and negotiation.

Wadawurrung plants under the River Red Gum beside the front gate are now growing well.

Originally, the project included information about how the Wadawurrung used each plant for such things as food, medicine and fibre. Liz designed a Self-guided Walk Booklet which included all this information, and planned to post it on the CoGG/GBG website. However, because the cultural appropriation issue is now so important to the Wadawurrung, they are not happy for other people to speak or write about their plant usage. It is Liz's hope that the Wadawurrung be involved in the delivering of this information at Geelong Botanic Gardens.

The information she is free to use has been compiled by Liz, with technical assistance from her daughter, in a comprehensive and profusely illustrated 45-page booklet called On Wadawurrung Country – A Guided Walk in Geelong Botanic Gardens. Liz has had a number printed for the use of the Guides and the Geelong Botanic Gardens, and it may be possible for some of the information to be made available to the public.

The Friends will continue to work with the GBG towards Wadawurrung involvement, hoping to have a Wadawurrung walk at least once a year. Possibly in conjunction with our Guides, it would be taken by a member of the Wadawurrung community, which would involve some cost. Liz hopes that the Friends of the Geelong Botanic Gardens may be able to contribute towards this when the time comes.

Many hours of passionate work on the Project have contributed to significant progress in the Gardens' understanding of First Nations people, their history, their sensibilities, their strong commitment to culture, land and place, as well as to our knowledge of plants and their place in the lives of the Wadawurrung.

They have resulted in a beautiful booklet which is respectful of Wadawurrung culture and will be a comprehensive and easily accessible resource for GBG Guides.

We are grateful for the extensive work and dogged persistence which has been required for this project; we extend our thanks to Liz and the members of the Friends who have supported her.

On behalf of us all, thank you, Liz. We are so proud of you.

Lynne Clarke

PLANT IN FOCUS: *Haemanthus coccineus* (Blood Lily)

It is known by many common names including blood lily, ox tongue, paintbrush lily, March flower, April Fool, blood flower, powderpuff lily, king-of-Candia, and pincushion.

With its attention-grabbing vibrant orange/blood red flowers, the Geelong Botanic Gardens blood lilies Haemanthus coccineus put on a showy display adjacent to the Hanson Gates, and ironically, true to its name, was in full bloom on an April Fool's Day visit!

Haemanthus coccineus belongs to the Belladonna, Nerines family and has evolved and adapted to thrive in climates with dry summers. This lily was likely the very first South African flower to be collected from Table Mountain and was illustrated in a European publication as early as 1605. Haemanthus is endemic to South Africa, Namibia and the kingdoms of Lesotho and Swaziland and in the genus Amaryllidaceae, subfamily Amaryllidoideae, with some 22 known species

.

Containing masses of tiny flowers, the cup-shaped flowers produce abundant nectar and pollen and appear on bare 20cm leopard-like speckled stems from February to April. Flowering is followed by fleshy translucent berries containing one to three dark seeds with two large strap-like green glossy leaves forming either side of the bulb - hence the ox tongue or elephant ears reference – and they last through winter and spring to generate energy for the next year's growth before the bulbs rest dormant over summer.



Photo: Gail Thomas

These summer deciduous bulbs are perfect for containers, pots or raised garden beds, thrive in full sun to part shade but dislike wet feet. The bulbs don't like disturbance so it is advised to only divide them every two or three years. They can be propagated by separating offsets from the parent bulb when dormant and re-potted in well-drained loamy or sandy soil ensuring the top of the bulb is just above the soil surface and then kept in a warm bright area with indirect light. The soil is best barely moist until new growth appears to avoid rotting.

The plant has a red, sticky sap that has historically been used in South Africa for both practical and medicinal purposes, though it is toxic if ingested. It was believed the plant has medicinal properties to stop bleeding, and was used in traditional remedies for treating ulcers and sores. Traditionally native Americans and South African traditions used the sap as a dye for textiles and baskets and historically it was used as an insect repellent.

Gail Thomas



Seed heads
Photo: Anne Bourke



Blood Lily in bloom in GBG
Photo: Gail Thomas

FGBG ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2026

FGBG PRESIDENT'S REPORT

The past year has had some unexpected challenges for the Friends Committee. Both our hard-working President, Jan Cheyne, and Treasurer, Judy Fyfe, have had to step down from duties temporarily due to ill-health. The Committee wish Jan and Judy a speedy recovery and hope to see them back at the Gardens soon.

Thank you also to all members of the Committee for their ongoing support and contributions. Also, a special thank you to five long serving Committee members who are stepping down from the Committee this year – Judy Fyfe, Lynne Clarke, Chris Balaam, Carol Richardson and Barrie Satchell. The new Committee consists of Rosslyn Jablonsky (Acting President), Anne Bourke (Vice-President), John Lewis (Treasurer), Luanne Thornton (Secretary), Pammi Prior, Tilly Brunton, Isla Connolly, Glenda Guest and Libby Hogg.

Our new strategy plan focuses on increasing volunteer numbers, promotion of the Friends and their activities, and special projects such as the re-location of the Nursery and installing permanent GBG access at Gate 3.

Jan sent a message thanking volunteers and GBG staff for their hard work and collaboration. She is looking forward to an exciting year ahead.

Budget: Barrie Satchwell

The Budget has faced challenges in recent years with incoming revenue falling due to Covid, and scaling down of Nursery activities while costs have risen, resulting in a significant loss. The full statement is available on request.

The Gift Fund contributed to plants for the Perennial Border, Heritage Rose garden as well as new signage for the Significant Trees within the Gardens.

Perennial Border: Jan Cheyne

A little new real estate at the back of the Border behind the big Yew was transferred to our care this year, which we are slowly planting out, and there is more to fill in as Spring advances. The challenge is to blend it seamlessly with what is already there! But we love a challenge, and there are always new plants, new cultivars of old plants, and other Favourites to trial, so that the Border remains a colourful, botanically interesting part of the Gardens.

The Garden staff is always happy to help out with the heavy stuff, so a big thankyou to Tim, Steve and Liam for the pruning, mulching and digging.

Weeders: Marg Oates

Our strong partnership with the Gardens staff has yielded excellent results, particularly on the Northern Border, where coordinated weeding and mulching efforts has significantly improved the situation.

The group's scope of work continues to expand. Alongside our primary focus on maintaining the Front Entrance and 21st Century Garden, and clearing the Bunya Pine areas, we have assisted with plant propagation for the 175th anniversary, mass planting in the 21st Century Garden, and ongoing care in the Temperate and Vegetable Gardens.

Roses: Marg Ward

It has been a very satisfying year for our group. We might be reduced in numbers, but we work together so well, we enjoy what we do and we have accomplished much. We also receive great support from GBG staff, and this we really appreciate.

The spring flowers last year were really quite spectacular. Carabella in the top bed attracted a lot of attention. The Tea roses in bed 3 were covered in blooms from early Spring until well into the Autumn. Our Bourbon roses also paid us well with lots of blooms and plenty of recurrence in autumn.

We conducted an audit and identified spaces that need new planting, so we began the task of sourcing varieties that fitted in with our brief of being a heritage rose collection. It is becoming more and more difficult to find older varieties. Thanks to the Friends who paid the bill. These have now been delivered, the GBG staff have potted them and we will be planting them this coming spring.

Nursery: Bruce McGinness and Norma Shepherd

The loyal band of volunteers keep attending each week, we are very grateful for their dedication and companionship. It is marvellous to have Liz, Denise, Alison and Ian back in the nursery, but we still await the influx of new volunteers. Propagation is successfully providing stock for sales on Wednesdays and two very successful Saturday sales. The support from GBG at all levels has been marvellous and warms our hearts. We have been busy planning for the nursery relocation and are grateful for the help and support of the FGBG committee and GBG.

FGBG ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2026 cont'd

Guides: Gwen Anderson

2026 has seen only positive signs for the guides following the appointment of new management and administrators. We have once again gained the confidence of the staff and are working jointly on many issues relating to the gardens.

- Restoration of the self-guided walk sheets and Garden Highlights to the front entry for the benefit of the visitors to the gardens.
- Guide training with four very conscientious trainees.
- 253 hours 23 minutes guiding hours were given, with 548 visitors as well as 166 visitors to the Discovery Table. $1024.20 cents was donated towards the Gardens.

Friends' History and Library: Luanne Thornton

During this year the Library has taken second place to other things, particularly our historic Timeline of the Friends, which Nadia has continued to work on. A cut off for the first part, Years 1985 – 2025 has included the 4 months to April 10th, the 175th Anniversary of the Geelong Botanic Gardens.

We have also been updating our scrapbooks of newspaper and other cuttings, which we will display at the Open Day on October 3rd.

Our Library catalogue on a very old computer needs updating and this will be a focus during 2027.

Our other interest is Jubaea, now printed three times a year. Sal in the office has recently started using Canva for the publication, a bit of a learning curve, but she has taken it in her stride. Thanks Sal.

Botanical Art: Pammi Pryor

Our thriving Botanical Art School year has seen our students fully immersed in the joy of learning all things Botanical. This learning, under the consummate tutorship of Craig Lidgerwood, Amanda Ahmed, Amanda Blake Sutterby and John Pastoriza Pinol has entailed a diversity of mediums, formats and techniques in the study of botanical art and of living plant subjects. Our student's artistic endeavour, scientific inquiry and integrity were successfully showcased at our wonderful exhibition held at the Gordon Gallery last September. We now eagerly await the launch of our Botanical Artists 2027 Diary, further highlighting the superb artwork of our students and tutors. Our tutors have provided workshops to educate a wider audience and continue to encourage students to exhibit further afield. For example, many of our students, some for the first time, have been accepted for exhibiting in the 2026 Friends of the Royal Botanic Gardens Melbourne's bi-annual TABI (The Art of Botanical Illustration) exhibition to be held later this year.

Events: Allison Martland and Denise Feldman

Catering for outside groups helps promote the Friends and GBG "brand". This year we again accepted an invitation to provide Devonshire Teas at the Ceres annual Makers Market. A visit to Cruden Farm and Cranbourne Botanic Gardens was a highlight of the 2025/26 calendar, and garden tours to Anglesea heathlands, Ballarat, Lambley and several local gardens were well attended. The celebration of 40 years of the Friends was marked by the production of a commemorative mug, with the Events team developing the project and selling these at events.

Wadawurrung Connection: Liz Bennetto

This project aims to establish a strong connection between GBG and the Wadawurrung by working collaboratively to develop community awareness of their culture, with emphasis on their use of plants for food, medicine and materials, their conservation of resources and their methods of land care. The ultimate goal is to increase community awareness of the rich culture, language, medicine and food of the Wadawurrung people on whose land the Geelong Botanic Gardens sit.

Liz Bennetto has been working very hard for a number of years on the Wadawurrung Connection Project, and you can find out more about this in this issue of Jubaea.

FRIENDS OF GEELONG BOTANIC GARDENS COMMITTEE 2027

President: Jan Cheyne, Rossy Jablonsky (Acting)
Vice President: Anne Bourke
Secretary: Luanne Thornton
Treasurer: Barrie Satchell (Acting)
Committee: Tilly Brunton, Isla Connolly, Glenda Guest, Libby Hogg, Pammi Prior.

NURSERY VOLUNTEER BRUCE McGINNESS

Everyone was delighted when we heard that Bruce McGinness, co-ordinator with Norma Shepherd of the Friends' Nursery at the GBG, was nominated by Geelong Botanic Gardens to receive a leadership award at the recent Volunteers Week.

Bruce has brought to the Nursery extensive knowledge and experience of plants through his long professional career at Burnley Gardens, the School of Botany at the University of Melbourne, and long-standing voluntary work in the Australian Plants Society. He especially loves propagating native plants, the rarer, more difficult and more endangered the better. One of his aims in this is to have them ready for sale at the Nursery!

Along with all this expertise he brings generosity of spirit, a very encouraging manner to us who know less of botany, and the opportunity to develop our skills, have confidence in them and therefore take initiative for the management of plants.

He organised visits to many native nurseries so that we could assess what would be best for us in establishing our new nursery. His planning and organisational skills have been put to good use. He and Norma have worked together both running the nursey as it recovers from recent set-backs, and in assessing the prospects for the future.

Thank you, Bruce! Congratulations.

Lynne Clarke



GBG ACTING COORDINATOR DANIEL CORNWELL

Daniel Cornwell has been Acting Coordinator of the Geelong Botanic Gardens since February 2026. He has worked for the City of Greater Geelong since 2008, starting as a swimming instructor before progressing through a range of leadership roles across the organisation.

Over the years, Daniel has built extensive experience in people leadership, service delivery, project management and operational planning. His career has included positions such as Senior Team Leader Depot Operations, Acting Coordinator City Works Maintenance, and Acting Trees Management Coordinator, before joining the Gardens team.

Daniel describes his leadership approach as "people first". He believes that when people feel valued, supported and heard, great outcomes follow. He enjoys working collaboratively, listening to different viewpoints and helping others develop and succeed. He is always keen to hear new ideas and explore opportunities that benefit both the Gardens and the wider community.

We welcome Daniel to the Gardens and look forward to further collaboration.

Luanne Thornton



L to R: Sheree Parker (Operations), Johanna Vanwetten (Admin) , Daniel Cornwell, Amelia Morris (Education)

EVENTS ARE IMPORTANT!

One of the most important roles of the Friends of Geelong Botanic Gardens is to advocate for the Gardens and promote community engagement with them. In the process, there are important benefits for our members: our annual program of events provide us with the opportunity to engage as a community. We all value the friendships formed and the mutual support provided. This community and support was never more needed than during 2024-5, when our future seemed uncertain and we were unable to meet at the Gardens' Meeting Rooms. Our Events Team stepped up, organizing outside venues and many opportunities to get together. During a difficult 12 months, it was very important to celebrate our friendships.

This is a special tribute to Allison and Ian Martland, and Denise and Terry Feldman, who put in hours of work organizing venues, purchasing supplies, cooking and serving feasts as the leaders of the Events Team.

Friends' Christmas Picnic - Wednesday 27 November 2024
Chinese Brush Painting Workshop - February 2025
S**eniors Guided Walk & Morning Tea** - February 2025
Garden Tour and Plant Sale - East Geelong Arundel Helena Buxton's Garden - February 2025
Guest Speaker - Stephen Ryan The Legacy of Ellis Rowan - CWA Hall, March 2025
Champagne Breakfast to Celebrate 40 Years of FGBG - 4 April 2025
Macedon Three Gardens Autumn - Self Drive Tour - 13 May 2025
Friends Volunteer Week Soup Lunch with speaker: John Arnott - CWA Hall 21 May 2025. A delicious soup lunch crafted by our own catering team. A chance to unite and enjoy each other's company for a few hours of friendship and recognition of a job well done.
Winter Lunch at Mt Duneed Estate - 17 June 2025
Bastille Day Supper And Movie Night - Newcomb Community Centre 14 July 2025
FGBG Annual General Meeting with Guest Speaker John Bentley - CWA Hall 25 August 2025
Inspired By Nature 9 Geelong School of Botanical Art Exhibition - Gordon Gallery 10-24 September 2025
Angair Wildflower Self-Drive Tour and Talk - 23 September 2025
A Spring Afternoon with Friends members event, In Friends' Own Gardens - 7 October 2025
Cranbourne Coach Tour - 30 October 2025
FGBG 40th Anniversary Celebration with Members - November 2025
Guest Speaker Helen Botham La Trobe the Plantsman - February 2026
Welcoming Seniors to Geelong Botanic Gardens - February 2026
Ballarat Gardens Coach Trip - March 2026

Allison and Denise were largely responsible for most of these events, strongly supported by Ian Martland and Terry Feldman. These wonderful people spent many hours organizing venues, purchasing ingredients, preparing food, transporting equipment and creating decorations. Ian's egg sandwiches are legendary. Denise and Allison are renowned for delicious cakes. Terry and Ian ensure that equipment functions smoothly. They are ably assisted by the catering team at all Friends' events.

Allison, Ian, Denise and Terry, we are so grateful for your work. At a time of uncertainty for the Friends, when many members needed support, it was doubly important for us to gather as a community. In difficult times, you made a huge difference. Thank you.

Liz Bennetto



Kevin Hoffman Walk, September 2026
Photo: Dinny Goonan



Kevin Hoffman Walk, September 2026
Photo: Dinny Goonan

GEELONG SCHOOL OF BOTANICAL ART

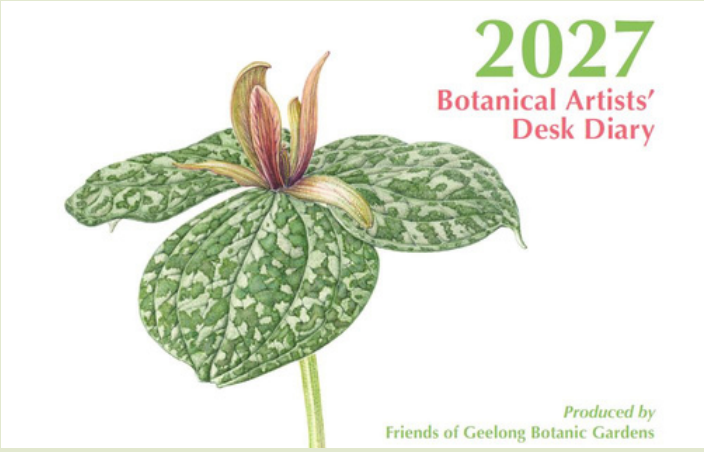
TERM 4 DATES

MONDAY CLASS – In-Person
$435 members or $465 non-members
Tutor: Amanda Blake Sutterby
9.30 am to 4.00 pm
Large-Scale Flower Studies
26 October
2, 9, 30 November
14 December

FRIDAY CLASS – In-Person
$435 members or $465 non-members
Tutor: Craig Lidgerwood
9.30 am to 4.00 pm
Intermediate
16, 30 October
13 November
4, 11 December

FRIDAY CLASS – In-Person
$405 members or $435 non-members
Tutor: Amanda Ahmed
10.00 am to 3.30 pm
Beginners Botanical Art with Watercolour
9, 23 October
6, 20, 27 November

SATURDAY CLASS – In-Person
$465 members or $495 non-members
Tutor: John Pastoriza-Pinol
9.30 am to 4.00 pm
Advanced to Semi-Professional
10 October
7, 21 November
5, 12 December



The 2027 Botanical Artists Desk Diary is now available from the Friends Office

$25 Each

Editorial Team:
Luanne Thornton, Anne Bourke, Lynne Clarke, Nadia Zacchigna
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Website: www.friendsgbg.org.au

FGBG Committee 2026-27:
President: Jan Cheyne
Vice Presidents: Rosslyn Jablonsky and Anne Bourke
Treasurer:
Secretary: Luanne Thornton
Committee Members:Tilly Brunton, Pammi Pryor, Isla Connolly, Libby Hogg, Glenda Guest
Patron: Stephen Ryan

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DIARY DATES AT A GLANCE

JUBAEA SUBMISSIONS for the next Edition are due by 18 January 2027.
All articles including mid to high resolution photos (jpeg) can be sent to the FGBG Office

NOVEMBER

THEMED GUIDED WALK 'HERITAGE ROSES'

Sunday 8 November, 2.00 pm at the Front Gates

The rose is one of the most loved and cultivated plants. It has occupied a prominent place in the art, literature and religions of many cultures since early times and stands as a symbol of love innocence and purity; nationhood, courage, passion and desire. The earliest pictorial evidence of a rose dates back to the sixteenth century BC, Royal Minoan Palace at Knossos in Crete.

THROUGH THE GARDEN GATES

Monday 9 November, 10.30 am - 4.00 pm

Our popular self-drive tour of 4 gardens this year is in the Birregurra/Beeac area. Three of the gardens have opened for Open Gardens Victoria, and one surrounds a bluestone homestead of historic significance. Late Spring will beautifully showcase these wonderful gardens. The tour ends at the final garden with a delicious afternoon tea (included in the price) and sale of plants propagated from members' own gardens. BYO picnic lunch at the 2nd garden or purchase your own lunch along the way. **Members $40, non-members $50**

DECEMBER

SATURDAY PLANT SALE

Saturday 5 December, 10.00 am to 3.00 pm at the rear of the Gardens

Looking for something different and priced well below major retail outlets? Come and be tempted by our Salvias, Pelargoniums, Australian Plants, Perennials, Grasses and Succulents, sourced from our beautiful Botanic Gardens. Access can be arranged from Nursery for pickup of large plant purchases. Entry is from the Gardens only.

CHRISTMAS BREAKUP CELEBRATION

Wednesday 9 December, 12.00 noon

Members and volunteers are warmly invited to come together for our Christmas break-up celebration. This will be a relaxed opportunity to catch up, enjoy each other's company and celebrate the year's achievements before the holiday period begins. Please bring a small plate of food to share with the group. To help us plan for the event, kindly RSVP to the office.

FREE DISCOVERY WALKS

Every Wednesday at 11.00 am and Sunday at 2.00 pm

Meet your guide at the front steps of the gardens.

DISCOVERY TABLE in the Gardens

Third Sunday of Every Month, 1.00 – 3.00 pm

Meet the Friends' Guides for interesting information and direction to key plants and seasonal change.

DURING THE SCHOOL HOLIDAYS

- No Guided Walk on Wednesday 23 December, Sunday 27 December and Wednesday 30 December
- For Plant Nursery dates, check the Friends' website in December.
- The Office will be closed from Monday 21 December.

JANUARY 2026

The Office will close on Friday 18 December re-open on Monday 4 January at 10.00 am.

FEBRUARY

SENIORS FREE GUIDED WALK AND MORNING TEA

Thursday 18 and 25 February 9.30am

Join the Friends' trained Guides for a guided walk through the Geelong Botanic Gardens. This will be followed by a professionally catered-for morning tea and a welcome to the Gardens by members of the Friends of Geelong Botanic Gardens. The Friends wish to encourage Seniors to actively enjoy the Gardens, in the company of other Seniors and the Friends.

Bookings are essential. Please contact the Friends' Office 03 5229 0071 or info@friendsgbg.org.au to book your place and receive a confirmation itinerary.

WEEKLY PLANT SALES

Every Wednesday at the Friends' nursery at the rear of the Gardens 9.30 am to 12.30 pm.

For more information and bookings please go to www.friendsgbg.org.au
or contact the Friends' Office on 03 5229 0071 info@friendsgbg.org.au