



President's Report to the Annual General Meeting Sunday 18 September 2022

I am pleased to provide a report on activities of the Friends of the Dunedin Botanic Garden for the year ended 30 June 2022.

At the 2021 AGM I provided information about the programme planned for an event to celebrate the 50th anniversary of Rhododendron Day, a significant milestone in the history of the Dunedin Botanic Garden. This resulted in a 3-day celebration from 14-17 October, 2021 opening with a 'gala' cocktail evening and culminating with the regular annual Rhododendron Day plant sale. Included in our programme were events at Larnach Castle, Olveston House, and Glenfalloch Woodland Garden as well as Art in the Garden art classes, floral art demonstrations, Rhododendron Dell talk, tours with Doug Thomson, and tours of Tannock Glen.

The opening event for this celebration was an extremely successful cocktail evening which was held in the Propagation Facility. We gratefully acknowledge financial support from a grant from The Les Cleveland Charitable Trust through Margaret Cleveland, donations from Woodland Products through their director, Mike Rogan, and Frank Buddingh, Life Member and long time supporter of Friends of the Dunedin Botanic Garden, who is now resident in the USA. The contributions from these sources enabled us to successfully stage this event. The auction in the evening attracted spirited bidding on items generously donated by Anneloes Douglas (artwork), Blueskin Nurseries, Larnach Castle, Mitre 10 Mega, No.8 Distillery, Clare Reilly book, Nichols Garden Group, Seed & Friends as well as a number of unusual plants and shrubs. I personally acknowledge the assistance in the organisation of this event from Caroline Byrne, a former committee member who didn't hesitate when I asked for her help. I am most grateful to Caroline for all that she did in the planning stages and just for being there and being available.

After extensive advertising for our Rhododendron Day 50th anniversary events and the plant sale, we made the difficult decision to not hold our annual Rhododendron Day plant sale due to the Covid-19 restrictions at the time.

In May this year we were able to go ahead with our plant sale in the Propagation Facility building and this was a very successful event – attendance seemed less than in previous years and the weather was pretty dismal, but trade was steady and the people attending were looking for good plants at a great price. The financial result was a record for this event. We are very grateful for the assistance for both of our plant sales from the Botanic Garden management and staff – we could not do this without their enthusiastic and practical support, both leading up to the sales and being there on the day - also the work of a group of volunteers who assist in the propagation unit on the Friends' behalf.

I have to report that there have not been any Botanic Garden projects for the Friends to support during this period. As a committee we have been frustrated with the delays with the long talked about Demonstration Garden which is still awaiting sign off from the Dunedin City Council.

It is with sadness I record the passing of Louise Kilby, member of Friends of the Dunedin Botanic Garden since the inception of the organisation in 1986 and a member of the committee for more than 15 years. In 2011 Louise voluntarily took on the role of Information Centre volunteers' co-ordinator; she was a Propagation Volunteer and worked tirelessly in and for the Information Centre. In 2021 Louise was awarded Honorary Life Membership of our organisation and proudly wore the brooch we had made for her. We were honoured to attend her funeral and heard of the many things she did in the community, and were touched to see her Friends of the Dunedin Botanic Garden Life Membership brooch displayed with other memorabilia.

I thank all of our small committee for their commitment and interest in Friends of the Dunedin Botanic Garden especially to Ros Hughes for her accurate recording and reporting as Secretary. Ros is standing

again for general committee but has decided not to take on the role of Secretary. She has been a most diligent Secretary and we have worked well together. Gail Loughrey, who once again took on responsibility for contacting and organising stall-holders for the October plant sale, has decided 10 years on the committee is enough and is not standing again this year. We have appreciated having the continuity and knowledge that Gail's presence has brought. We have appreciated and valued input from new committee members Georgia Middlemiss and Glyn Smith. Glyn has been working with Gail for this year's October plant sale and we are delighted that she will take responsibility for co-ordinating the stall-holders. Georgia is studying to be a teacher, and is not standing again but I want to acknowledge the benefits of having a younger person on our committee. Georgia is also one of our reliable and regular volunteers in the Information Centre and has taken on the task of keeping the shop stock levels up to date for which we are very grateful.

Membership of the Friends remains fairly static despite the low annual fee of \$15.00 for individual membership. A priority is to rebuild an accurate database and to this end appointed Muriel Turner from the committee as Membership Secretary. Muriel has worked hard this year to get the database up to date, even phoning people for whom we had no other contact details, and establishing their current status. We are pleased to be getting more accurate records of membership.

We circulate quarterly newsletters to members and our Facebook presence has increased thanks to committee member Sam Moncur who has taken responsibility for the social media outlets that we have at our disposal to ensure that we are keeping both our members and the public up to date with what we are doing. With the regular increases in postage we prefer to send the newsletter by email – most of our members do have access to this medium but there are a number for whom we only have a postal address.

We are most grateful for the work of our new Treasurer, Guy Frederick, who has put in many hours looking after and reporting on our finances. The position is not like a club treasurer dealing with subs as we run a retail business within the Information Centre which means stocktaking, payment of invoices, banking & reconciliation of shop takings etc. which is rather more than most volunteers would expect to be doing. On behalf of the whole committee I thank Guy for his perseverance and attention to detail to keep us on track and the finances up to date. At the same time we are pleased that our previous treasurer, Kathryn, has remained on the committee and is always available to assist with historical information and guidance.

During this financial year we received a most generous donation from Sam Foley, artist, being the proceeds from one of his paintings from his exhibition entitled "Last Light in the Garden", a beautiful series of paintings of various corners and views in the rhododendron dell. We are extremely grateful to Sam for this gesture and support.

Special thanks to the Botanic Garden staff for their willingness to assist the committee with a wide range of things and particularly to Alan Matchett for his accessibility, wise oversight, historical knowledge of committees past, and ongoing assistance with management of the Information Centre

INFORMATION CENTRE

We have a core of dedicated, experienced people volunteering in the Information Centre. A number of the volunteers are University students and it is great to have interest from young people but it does create gaps in the roster during semester breaks and exam times. We have had several reliable student volunteers resign this year due to gaining part-time employment. We advertised through the Volunteer South website seeking additional volunteers and have interviewed many applicants as a result of this advertising, although not all applicants progress through to training and working in the Information Centre. One of the DCC appointed Botanic Garden Rangers, Aileen Ramsay, has had oversight of the Information Centre volunteers and roster incorporated into her job description. I am indebted to Aileen for ensuring the roster is fully staffed and assisting with recruitment, interviewing and training of new volunteers.

The committee regularly consider the need for a willing and dedicated person to take on the role of co-ordinating the volunteers in the Information Centre. For this role to be attractive there would probably need to be some sort of remuneration which would reduce funds available to support Botanic Garden projects – this is an ongoing discussion and comes up at committee meetings several times a year.

I thank the Botanic Garden staff for their assistance in and around the Information Centre, but particularly Rangers Aileen and Eric for their interaction with the volunteers and the stability and continuity that their presence provides.

DUNEDIN BOTANIC GARDEN INFORMATION CENTRE SHOP

The shop in the Information Centre is organised and run by Friends of the Dunedin Botanic Garden committee. Management of stock, ordering, entering stock into the system and stocktaking is a time-consuming job, parts of which can only be undertaken outside of regular opening hours. At the moment this is being managed by myself with most of the stock updates being undertaken by Georgia Middlemiss from our committee, but ideally we need to have a designated person in this role – whether that becomes a volunteer role or a paid position remains open to discussion but it is not the role of the President to be responsible for the shop.

Retail sales were down through the winter period and without international visitors we have certainly noticed a decline in the sale of some products; however we have also been surprised at the number of locals who continue to pop in to purchase plants, for which we thank the work of Alice and her team in the propagation facility. Visitors regularly comment on the quality and range of our gift lines and we are able to keep our pricing at very competitive levels. We have a cabinet to display locally crafted products which includes wood-turned items from Jonathon Leichter, art prints by Janet Smith, posters and cards produced by Guy Frederick, paua & rimu earrings from Leadingetch and beeswax products from Waikouaiti. We are also exclusive stockists of a series of Pat Brookes cards which are available in packs of 7 in a specially produced folder. We encourage you to take time to look at what we have to offer, bearing in mind that all profits go towards Botanic Garden projects and improvements.

Sue Lambie, President



Louise Kilby

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2022

Presented by Treasurer, Guy Frederick (See separate Financial Report document)

NOTE REGARDING TANNOCK SCHOLARSHIP

In June we received applications to the Tannock Scholarship from staff members Tom Myers and Dylan Norfield to assist with expenses to attend the BGCI/BGANZ Conference in Melbourne 25-29 September. They have each requested \$1950 and this was approved at the July meeting. This expenditure will feature in the next financial year reporting.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

President: The office of President is for a 2 year term. The Vice-President elected at last year's Annual General Meeting is ready to be nominated into the President role.

Secretary: The office of Secretary is held by Ros Hughes. Ros has indicated that she does not want to be nominated to this role but will remain on the committee.

Treasurer: Guy Frederick is available for election.

Committee:

According to the Constitution in addition to the President, Vice President, Immediate Past President, Secretary and Treasurer we can have a general committee of up to 6 other elected members. Muriel Turner, Glyn Smith, and Ros Hughes are all available for re-election which means we can accept up to 3 additional nominations.

Alan Matchett as Botanic Garden Manager, or his equivalent, is an ex officio appointment on the committee.