

## **Chairman of Friends Report**

The past year has been a busy one for the Friends, Plant Growers Group and Volunteers. These three groups participated in 6 main events, the Hydrangea Walk, Christmas in the Garden, Autumn Garden Weekend and Plant Fair, The BGANZ Open Day, the Bluebell and Sculpture Walk and the Garden Fair at Harper's Mansion.

The success of these events was absolutely reliant on the input and dedication of our Friends and Volunteers. Consider, for example that it required 172 volunteers to run this year's Autumn Garden Weekend and Plant Fair. Add to that the work undertaken by the Plant Growers Group to produce the many thousands of Plants, which were offered for sale over the preceding months. It is an amazing effort.

And of course there are monthly working bees, which attract from 25 to 40 Friends and volunteers every month. Much is achieved at the Working Bees with plant propagation and garden maintenance being the main goals. Of course there is always an element of education, information sharing and social interaction over a cup of tea as well. The Working Bee program has now expanded to include the second Saturday of every month to encourage a wider demographic of, hopefully, working people and youth.

The Friends Committee, although only quite small, works exceptionally effectively and efficiently to either organise or support all our events. A huge thankyou to our current committee of Chris Blaxland, Judy Keast, Shandra Egan, Peter Scott, Kathryn Jeffrey and Richard Scott who work cohesively and enthusiastically. And to our three members who retired this year, Ian Dwyer, Susan Hand and Lyn Barrett, thank you for all your hard work and commitment.

We look forward to another fulfilling and busy year ahead.

**Chris Webb**  
**Chairman**  
**SHBG Friends**