

THE YEAR IN REVIEW - Snapshot of 2018...

What a busy year we have had with the ongoing development of the plans for the buildings and the gardens, the commencement of education programs, more construction



Artists impression of proposed Education Centre

and planting on the site and of course, lots of events.

A major focus this year has been the review of our business plan, including addressing where we would like to be when fully operational and how we intend to get there. Essential to our future viability is the construction of the Visitors Centre. John Wardle Architects have now completed the concept plan for the centre allowing us to more accurately identify the funding requirements to construct the building.

Our short-term goal to increase income and provide services to the community will be the construction of the Education Centre. The DA for the building has been approved and the funding appeal will be launched in March. Currently the main source of income generated by the Gardens, approximately \$65,000 for 2017/18 financial year, comes from plant sales both on and off site. To improve the opportunities for increased plant sales and with the help of a federal grant, the nursery has been extended to include a retail area. Retail operations on a more regular basis can commence after we have met DA approval for the nursery, however it contains 17 pages of conditions just for change of use. The Construction Certificate for the Education building is still being assessed by Council after 3 months.

Local garden owners continue to generously support the Botanic Garden. They made 6 gardens

available for fundraising either individually or as part of our Autumn Open Garden weekend. Currently these open gardens contribute a major portion of our annual income.

Much has happened with the physical development of the site including extending pathways, developing planting in the Winter Woodland, planting the start of the *Daphne* collection, the Crowe *Camellia* collection and the *Hamemilis* collection (witchhazel) donated by John & Ann McKenzie, earthworks in front of the shed, planting the native area including the stand of endangered *Eucalyptus macarthurii*, constructing the retail area and new shade sail and continuing the installation of donated pavers.

Continued development of educational opportunities at the Gardens has seen eager involvement with students from Bowral High and Aurora Steiner Schools. Once the proposed Education Centre is operational, we will be able to offer these facilities for visiting schools and groups regardless of weather.

In February Ross Stone took on the position of Development Manager for the Gardens. Hassos and Associates have been appointed as interim bookkeepers to help the transition of accounting software until after we have met the 17 pages of DA conditions and we find new volunteers to help with the role. In June we entered into a partnership with the Foundation for Rural and Regional Renewal (FRRR) allowing us to provide tax deductibility for donations to the Gardens.



Above: Volunteer's workshop
Right: Sculpture of frog donated by John Olsen



Students from Bowral High planting daffodils bred by Tony Davis

The Friends Committee has continued its focus this year on working bees, events, volunteering and its key work in organising and implementing the Autumn Garden Weekend.

The number of subscribed Friends continues to grow and this is reflected in the steady numbers who attend working bees and events. The ongoing success and growth of The Friends committee and volunteers have assisted with all events held this year as well as providing support for visiting groups by way of refreshments and guiding services.

The ongoing success and growth of the Autumn Garden and Plant Fair Weekend is dependent on the support of additional volunteers. We now require around 150 Friends and volunteers to hold the event.

The success of the Plant Fair being held on site has led the committee to make the decision to expand its base and invite in external nurseries for the 2019 event. Our response from the invited nurseries has been positive and we anticipate this being a very successful development.

The dedicated plant propagators have worked hard again this year to make our sales events a great success. We had about 5,000 plants ready for the Plant Fair in April and raised more than \$50,000. The work of propagating started in late December and early January.

A second Working Bee has been in operation on the third Wednesday afternoon of each month, specifically for the care of the nursery as we try to build up our stock ready for our on-site nursery. The nursery will become a major focus of the garden as well as a major income stream. We take every opportunity to sell the plants and recently had successful sales at both the Garden History Society evening at the Gardens and at Les Musgrave's open garden. The final event for the year was a Hydrangea & plant sale at the Gardens linked with the family picnic day on the 8th December.

We recently did a tally of the investment in the Garden to date. Over the last eight years, we have raised nearly \$700,000 in grant money and over \$1 million in community and business support, with around \$500,000 of this latter money continuing on an annual basis. The appeal for funds to complete the retail nursery demonstrated the willingness of our stakeholders to support our projects. Funding of \$500,000 for construction of the Education Centre is our immediate major goal. The Centre is highly desirable and should be achievable.

All in all a good and satisfying year and the plan for it to be even better next year.

DONATE A PAVER TO CELEBRATE THE NEW YEAR



One way to support the Garden and to also leave your own mark there, is to donate a paver. This appeal is open again for the Christmas/ New Year season and will close on 31 Jan 2019. These pavers will be used in the circular Oak Rondel near the national collection of birch and the winter woodland. You can choose what to say on the paver but most people have family names and sometimes special dates. Pavers are \$100 each and can be purchased by going to our website <https://shbg.com.au/donations/donate-a-paver/> to order.

A FUN CHRISTMAS PICNIC



Stalls well stocked and plenty of eager buyers



The Highland Aires entertaining the picnickers



Daniel, the clown' entertained kids and adults alike

It was fun for everyone at the Christmas picnic and plant sale held on Saturday 8 December. It's hard to say how many people were there because people kept coming and going. Many people were attracted to the plant sale and just came to do their Christmas shopping. There were probably a hundred or so people who came just to buy plants. Hydrangeas were galloping out of the gate and trolleys were loaded with all sorts of Christmas goodies for the garden.

Many family groups and friends came with their picnic and had a relaxing time. Others came with family and not much more, so purchased a BBQ sausage, drinks from the bar and relaxed on the grass in the very warm afternoon.

We were all entertained by the wonderful quintet of carol singers, the Highland Aires. They made sure everyone got a private performance by going and joining groups spread all over the garden... and they put a smile on everyone's face.

The smaller kids all flocked to Daniel who had them all enthralled and thoroughly engaged listening to his stories. Even the adults couldn't help smiling.

The plaster painting was also popular, and many kids went home with a painted piece of Christmas plaster. We were so lucky with the weather. If anything, it was too hot!! Fancy that – in December. But it only lasted a day or so and we lucked in on the right day.

COCKTAIL PARTY TO LAUNCH A SPECIAL APPEAL FOR THE EDUCATION CENTRE

SPECIAL INVITATION
JOIN US FOR A COCKTAIL PARTY AT
OLDBURY
OLDBURY RD, SUTTON FOREST

Sunday 3 March 2019 4pm - 6pm
-FOR-
The Southern Highlands Botanic Gardens Building Appeal Launch
Tickets: \$50 per person Dress: Smart Casual
RSVP: 24 February 2019 at <https://www.trybooking.com/ZVMR>

“  ”

The development of the Southern Highlands Botanic Gardens is a project I fully support and it continues to grow with the exciting new education centre.”
Charlie Albone, Prominent landscape designer
Enquiries: ross.stone@shbg.com.au

 Southern Highlands Botanic Gardens

Mark your diaries, get out your cheque books or bring along your credit cards to help with this special appeal. Sunday 3 March 2019, we are launching an appeal to support the building and fit out for the new Education Centre.

What is the Education Centre? I hear you ask.

This building will be positioned next to the existing Shed and will be the hub of the education program for the Gardens. It will allow much needed all weather protection for school children and adult workshops, demonstrations and exhibitions. The fitout will have modern audio-visual equipment and a kitchenette and store rooms. It will accommodate up to 50 people.

The Education Centre will be a major step in meeting a core aim of SHBG to provide facilities for more focussed education and will be available for hire by the community. Charlie Albone will be our special guest at the launch, so those who loved him at the Chelsea dinner, will have another chance to see and hear him. Charlie is a big supporter of the Garden and the Education Centre.

Tickets are \$50 per person. For bookings go to: <https://www.trybooking.com/ZVMR>

Come along and support this important new venture.

GARDEN HISTORY SOCIETY MEMBERS INVADE THE GARDEN

When over 200 members of the one garden club visit the Garden at once, it's a big deal, almost an invasion. That's what happened on Friday 26 October when over 200 delegates of the Australian Garden History Society came to unveil the sandstone seat that they donated to the Garden. The seat is located towards the eastern end of the winding path, near the young Japanese maples. The garden had undergone a spruce up for these important visitors – all fanatical garden enthusiasts – and it did look wonderful. All the lawns were mown, the weeds were gone, some spring rain and growth made the overall trees and shrubs look in their prime.

This was the first day of the AGHS 3 day national conference held in the Highlands and organised by Meg Probyn, Chair of the Southern Highlands branch of the Society.

The Conference delegates included everyone who is anyone in the Australian gardening world. The Society Chair, Richard Heathcote, Patron, Tim Entwistle (Director and Chief Executive of Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria) and others... made an impressive roll up for the three-day conference. Of course, Charlotte and Chris Webb were heavily involved and sponsored the tours around some of the best Highland gardens. Feedback from that visit is that they were all impressed with the Garden and only had nice things to say.



SH Chair Meg Probyn, Patron, Tim Entwistle & The Society Chair, Richard Heathcote unveiling the sandstone seat which was donated to the Gardens by the Southern Highlands branch of the Society

HELPING WITH CHILDREN

We are calling for Volunteers to help with the children visiting and working at the Garden.

If you would like to become involved with these new enthusiastic supporters, you will need to get a **Working With Children Check** which is **free** and then register the number with SHBG.

It is easy to register.

Log on to the website:

<https://www.service.nsw.gov.au/transaction/apply-working-children-check>

and follow the links to apply.

Then go to the Service NSW office in Mittagong to show your photo ID and your Notification will come through in a couple of hours.

Forward the approval number and your date of birth to info@SHBG.com.au for the register

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Sunday 3rd March 4pm-6pm
Launch of Education Centre Appeal
Special guest: Charlie Albone
Venue: Oldbury Farm, Sutton Forest.
Entry: \$50 per person
Booking at: <https://www.trybooking.com/ZVMR>



Saturday, 30 March - Earth Hour
Commencing at 5.45pm



Sat 27th April & Sun 28th April
Autumn Garden & Plant Fair Weekend
Gates open 9am



Working Bees

1st Tuesday of every month
10am - noon

Wear comfortable clothes, hat & gloves
Enjoy a friendly chat over a cup of tea.

Nursery Working Bee
3rd Wednesday of every month
2pm - 4pm

Thank you in advance for your support - it is always appreciated

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