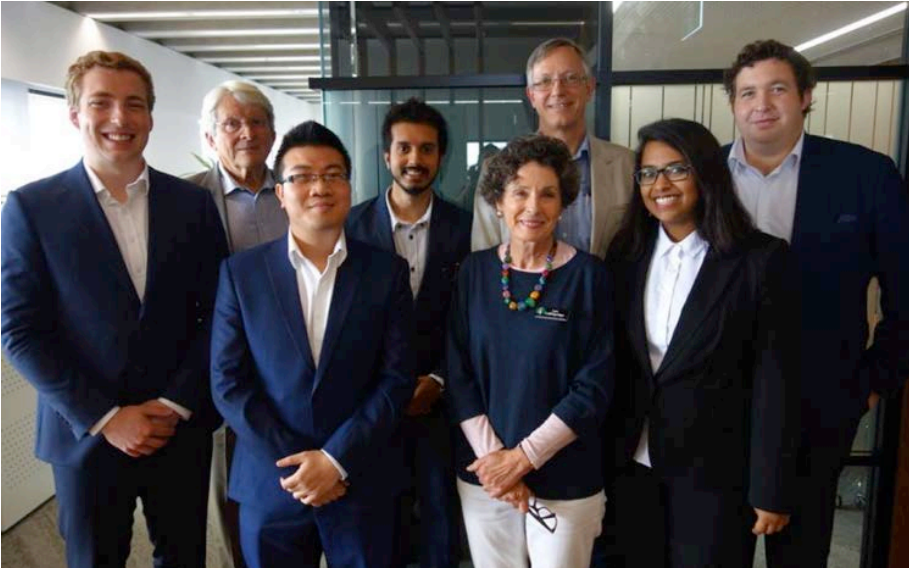


OPERCULUM

December 2017

MBA Students Engaged to help our Garden



Have you looked at the SHBG Facebook page recently?

If you have, you are probably wondering what the photo of the UTS students with a couple of our board members is all about. So, here's what has been happening behind the scenes.

About a year ago and before planning of the architectural competition for the design of the Visitors Centre, the Board members started preparing for a major grant application to fund the construction of the Visitors Centre.

When seeking many millions of \$\$\$ from a Government grant provider, the application process is quite rigorous, as you would expect, comprising a vast number of supporting documentation, including a Cost Benefit Analysis (CBA).

The Board held some serious brainstorming sessions about the business side of the

With UTS students: Michael Schaer (Swiss), Chris Blaxland, Louis Nguyen (Vietnamese), Nikhil Ravi (Indian) Lyn Collingridge, Frank van den Brink (coach), Keerthi Ramanathan (Indian) and Stuart Kelly (Aussie)

venture and the costs and benefits that could be achieved. These exercises are not something that we do every day, so after taking some external advice, we looked at UTS Shopfront to help us with our CBA.

Shopfront, run by UTS Business School, undertakes community projects. SHBG applied to have the students develop our CBA as a project and we were lucky enough to be accepted. We met with our team of five students a number of times, including their site visit to the Garden, and had a number of phone conferences.

cont page 4

From the Chairman

As we bring 2017 to a close I would like to reflect on our achievements in the garden for the year.

We have awarded the design for our new Visitors' Centre to John Wardle Architects. Thank you to John Webb & Associates for completing the design of the new Education Building.

Development in the garden continues with the completion of the dry stone walls at the Southern entry to the native garden, funded by a grant from IMB. The growing number of sculptures are settling in, including the John Olsen 'Leaping Frog' nestled under the shade of the eucalypts. Our collections continue to grow, including dwarf coloured stem dogwoods and an Elderberry (Sambucus) collection donated by Craig and Julie Hulbert.

In spite of our dry winter and spring, the gardens look wonderful thanks to the work of our volunteers throughout the year. The perennial borders abound with colour, our birch grove finally feels like a grove and the oak Rondel is starting to feel enclosed with the surrounding weeping box and copper beech hedges.

I look forward to an engaging 2018, with further development in the gardens, open days, plant sales, a kite flying day and the commencement of our education programs.

Charlotte Webb OAM

Botanic Garden and BDCU Mutual support pays off.



Southern Highlands Botanic Gardens was out in force at the BDCU Alliance Bank Annual General Meeting on the last day of November.

Held at the sumptuous Centennial Vineyards Restau-

rant, the AGM provided SHBG the opportunity to mount a display promoting the gardens. Board chairman Charlotte Webb and directors Chris Webb and Barry Barford quickly erected an impromptu exhibition with readily available

materials including the model of the John Wardle Architects-designed Visitor Centre.

It was also an opportunity to promote the Christmas Picnic and Plant Sale and numerous visitors took away a copy of the flyer.

SHBG is a community partner of BDCU under the bank's Community Support Program. When a customer holds a My Community account and nominates SHBG, interest earned is then matched by contributions from the bank and donated to SHBG.

The partnership gives SHBG one more avenue to showcase the development plans for the gardens and provides further invaluable exposure to the local community.

Talk by SHBG Chairman enlightens MV Probus Club

On 18 October, Charlotte spoke to a large group of Probus members at the Moss Vale Bowling Club. Many of these members of Probus didn't know much about SHBG and Charlotte's talk was focussed on outlining the history of the Garden.

It was so good to see the real interest and enthusiasm of the audience in our community venture. They were keen to know all about what we are doing, about the architecture competition, the Garden development and the



very valuable contribution made by our volunteers.

It just goes to show that the only way to reach out to members of the community is to connect with them directly. They took away a good impression of the Garden and will be on the look out to see its future unfold. They will also spread the word

among their friends. Some people came up to introduce themselves after the talk and suggested there may be further opportunities of speaking to related groups.

Off to a New Home



David Collingridge watches closely as the ride-on mower donated to SHBG is loaded for the trip to its new home.

A spokesman for the Gardens said the mower is in really good condition and will reduce the many hours of work needed in mowing the pathways and parts of the garden that the large Council mowers cannot reach.

Thanks David and Lyn for their very generous support.

Successful Day at Harper's Mansion



If you didn't go to the Harper's Mansion Garden and Plant Fair on Sunday 29 October, you missed the excellent presentation Charlotte Webb gave to an enthusiastic crowd.

Charlotte took a full trolley of sun loving perennials and another trolley of shade loving plants and described to the enraptured audience how they could be used in developing a perennial garden; how tall they grow, how much space they need, their colour, their nurturing needs and their reproduction habits. The passion she has for each of these plants really came across.

There is always something for everyone to grow and enjoy, including people who have down sized to a small garden, a courtyard garden or a retirement village. If you have a verandah or window sill, there are many small plants that grow well with not much care needed.

Succulents are Charlotte's new passion, particularly as they were the choice of table decoration at the Webb daughter's wedding in November. But there are also the old favourites of penstemons, sage, orchids and some small shrubs. There were plants of grey

foliage, dark green, light green, yellow and some striped ones and some that change colour depending on the amount of sun or shade they live in. Most of the specimens were in flower, but even if they weren't, Charlotte's description would conjure up the imagination so we could really see

them in full bloom. It was the right time of year to see these plants as the Spring garden is just coming to life.

We heard about the Bowerbird in the Webb's garden who resorts to yellow floral decoration for his nest when wooing a mate, when blue flowers are not available from their garden. Charlotte's favourite little daffodils had their heads chopped off to take pride of place in the Bower's elaborate nest. He made such a good decoration job that his vandalism of the daffodils was soon forgiven.

The SHBG stall at Harper's Mansion was in full swing throughout the day as it was bright and sunny and everyone was there. Les was in charge of a wonderful display of succulents and all the favourites were selling well. Many volunteers, of course, were on hand all day doing what they do very well - helping fill the SHBG coffers. The stall raised \$5400, not far from previous year's takings.

- Lyn Collingridge



Les on the job at Harpers mansion with a wonderful display of succulents.

A nursery for the garden

The Southern Highlands Botanic Gardens received a federal government grant to help fund a retail nursery planned for the garden in 2018. On November 29, Whitlam MP Stephen Jones presented a cheque for nearly \$9,000. SHBG chairman



Charlotte Webb OAM said that the funding is greatly appreciated. "This will give the Garden a chance to do what it does well – grow and sell plants.

"We will showcase the skills and expertise of the Garden's volunteers and experienced oper-ators.

The nursery will be operated under the care and con-trol of expert horticulturalists. "The project will also encourage more volunteers to become involved in the Garden and the sale of the plants will provide much needed revenue for the expansion and maintenance of the Garden."

Cont from Page 1

This community project forms part of the final year assessment of the students' MBAs. We were their 'client' in every way, including the students executing a Confidentiality Agreement to protect the information that we shared with them so they could get a good picture of our business and what we are trying to achieve.

On Saturday, 21 October, Chris Blaxland and Lyn Collingridge attended the presentation by the students of their term's work. Also attending was their supervisor, Dr Marco Berti, Shopfront organiser, Lisa

Andersen, and their industry coach, Frank van den Brink, who volunteered his services from his busy job at global engineering company, Jacobs.

The work the students did is extremely helpful to us and they gave us insights that we hadn't explored. They presented a very professional product for us to manipulate and use to support our case for major funding when that time comes. We were very fortunate to be able to work with such great young minds and they were a pleasure to work with. We thank them for their time, energy, expertise and friendship.



Judy Keast was presented with a life membership of the SHBG Friends by Stephen Jones when he visited the gardens last week. Judy has been a member of the Friends committee since its inception and has been the happy face looking after our volunteers wellbeing, organising and serving refreshments and food at our working bees and most of our events. What a great job you have done and continue to do for the SHBG. Thank you Judy.



Michael Nichols of **Turf2Trees** has taken time from his busy work schedule to bring his machinery and expertise to help at SHBG. Mowing at a previous working bee and using his edging machine he created edges around all the garden beds before most of the Friends arrived- a job that would have taken lots of people all day if done by hand. And all it cost us was a cup of tea! Thanks Michael.

Working Bees



1st Tuesday of the Month:

10am – Noon

2nd Saturday of the Month:

1pm - 3pm

Bring comfortable clothes, hat and gloves. Enjoy a friendly chat over a cup of tea.

Thank you in advance for your support.
It is always appreciated

Editor@shbg.com.au

**Next Operculum due to be published in February
DEADLINE FOR ARTICLES AND PHOTOS**

January 31 2018