



# FRIENDS OF Old Parliament House ROSE GARDENS

A Quarterly Newsletter

Issue N° 1 — Autumn 2011

## A Garden of Roses or a Rose Garden?

*As many of you may know – the new Friends organisation was launched in November last year. At this launch the son of Milton Simms the Rose Planting Designer, Greg Simms reminded those attending of the original aspirations for the Old Parliament House Rose Gardens. An extract of Milton Simms' speech, delivered by his son Greg follows.*

The speech delivered covered three questions:

- Where do we come from?
- What are we?
- Where are we going?

The first question related to the history of the establishment of the OPH Rose Gardens. The second question described the thinking behind the design and composition of the reconstructed rose gardens. And finally the last question provided views on the healthy

future of the Rose Gardens – with an emphasis on the question – are we a garden of roses or a well planned Rose Garden?

Now to consider briefly Gaugin's final question, "Where are we going?"

As a group I hope that the caretakers will want to become very familiar with their areas of responsibility. The first is to get to know the gardens. Tours and discussions could be a starting point followed by seasonal seminars on propagation from cuttings and budding, pruning and disease control and the best fun of all, breeding a brand new rose that is uniquely yours.

But we can do much more if we wish. Broinowski and his supporters would have planned their strategies well and sought support for the garden and the means of financing it.

We need to be just as forward thinking. The Garden Renaissance has provided us with the opportunity to become a well planned Rose Garden instead of a Garden of Roses,

which while it was pretty enough in its way did little to advance our knowledge of the history and the culture of the rose.

If we are to consolidate our gains and continue to improve the Gardens we need both a vision and the means by which to fulfill the vision.

The Friends are in the position to provide expert advice to the National Capital Authority on these matters. We might begin by setting as our goal admission to the World Listing of Leading Rose Gardens. Contributing to success in this goal would be the appointment of an experienced and competent Garden Manager. Next we could examine the possibility of setting up a volunteer group to draw on the great garden expertise that exists in our community.

A little further down the track I believe we should present a case for the amalgamation of the Old Parliament House Gardens with the National Rose Garden. Joint planning and joint management would provide scope for a truly spectacular garden of international standing.

Perhaps goals such as these sound difficult and distant. There is no need to rush. Let us first of all enjoy and invite others to enjoy the gardens to the full. We will have time for informal discussions over tea and coffee in our beautiful little club house and ideas will form and leaders emerge.

This is my great hope for the future of the Rose Garden.



From left: Greg Cornwell AM, Debbie and Greg Simms



# From the President



**Greg Cornwell AM**  
President

Dear Friends

Welcome to the first edition of the Friends Newsletter.

Firstly, the original "Friends of the Old Parliament House Gardens" under the auspices of the National Capital Authority (NCA) ceased to be in 2007, owing to budgetary constraints placed on the NCA.

Dr Malcolm Beazley AM from the University of Canberra, approached the Acting Chair of the NCA, Professor Don Aitken to discuss the future of the "Friends". Months later, Dr Beazley sought the support of horticulturist and radio presenter, Mrs Judy Refshauge to meet with the Director of the NCA, Mr Gary Rake. The outcome from this meeting was very positive and the "Friends of the Old Parliament House Rose Gardens" was born. Following incorporation, the inaugural Annual General Meeting was held on 24 May 2010, with the following officer bearers elected:

Dr Malcolm Beazley AM – Vice President

Ms Megan Douglas – Hon. Secretary

Ms Svetlana Manns – Hon. Treasurer

Mrs Judy Refshauge – Public Officer and Media Officer

Ms Jane Bradhurst – Artist and Author

Mr Cedric Bryant – Garden designer and Author

Mr Graham Evans – Head Gardener, OPH Rose Gardens

Mrs Lorraine Gentle – Volunteer

The Patrons-in-Chief of the original "Friends", Mrs Tamie Fraser AO and Mr Richard Broinowski, have agreed to continue their role, in the new "Friends". Many of the members of the original "Friends" have rejoined and are keen to enthusiastically support the planned activities, such as a regular newsletter and other publications, concerts, lectures and demonstrations. The NCA will still maintain the gardens with the help of horticultural staff and volunteers.

Some members are putting together a schedule of activities for 2011, which we hope will include a fundraising lunch, talks and a spring picnic. We are communicating with the Education Officer for the Horticulture Volunteers to coordinate activities. We would be grateful for any suggestions you may have for other promotions and activities in our Old Parliament House Rose Gardens. If you would like to forward your ideas, or would like to be involved in the events sub-Committee, please contact us:

PO Box 213, Curtin ACT 2605

Email: [friendsophrosegardens@gmail.com](mailto:friendsophrosegardens@gmail.com)

Your committee hopes you will enjoy this and future editions.

Happy rose gardening.

**Greg Cornwell AM**

President

## Feature Rose - Lorraine Lee

**The Rose**, Lorraine Lee was introduced in 1924 – a Tea Rose, rosy apricot pink. Its parents are 'Jessie Clark crossed with Captain Millet' and it is an everblooming variety. E W Hackett, the South Australian rose grower sold 44,000 'Lorraine Lee' in the 10 years after its release.



**Lorraine Lee**

In 1938 the climbing sport of Lorraine Lee was introduced. Lorraine Lee is a first cross of Gigantea and French roses and is recognised as one of Australia's most significant roses.

**The Person**, Lorraine Lee was born in Melbourne in 1897, a cousin of Alister Clark's niece - Jessie Clark. While her mother was Australian, her father was English and during her infancy the family returned to England. During the first world war, she contributed to the war effort – in the Woman's Land Army, British Forestry and in the Ministry for Munitions. In 1918 she was awarded an MBE for her efforts and services during WW1. In 1920 she visited Alister and his wife Edith at Glenara the Clark's property in Victoria where she was invited to choose a rose from one of the many unnamed seedlings. Thus was born one of Australia's greatest roses.



## *Horticulture Volunteers of the Old Parliament House Rose Gardens*

**By Lorraine Gentle - Coordinator**

### **Monday Ladies group**

The Horticulture Volunteers first started in the Old Parliament House Rose Gardens in 2005, after the refurbished gardens were opened at the end of 2004.

We are a group of 40 to 50 men and women from all walks of life. You will find a group of us in one garden or another on each day of the working week.

In the House of Representatives Garden, the Ladies Garden volunteer groups meet on Mondays and Fridays, and the Macarthur Garden volunteer group meets on Tuesdays.

In Senate Garden, the Broinowski Garden volunteer group meets on Wednesdays, and the Rex Hazelwood Garden volunteer group meets on Thursdays.

The National Capital Authority supports us by:

- Making sure we are fitted out in the appropriate clothing, i.e. polar fleece, shirt, gloves and hat.

- Making available the tools and other materials we need to care for the roses.
- Arranging training on many different topics, from pests of the garden to pruning, as well as all the aspects of Occupational Health and Safety.
- Arranging interesting excursions - over the past year or so we have visited the new Arboretum, had a 'behind the scenes' look at Floriade, and more recently a 'behind the scenes' look at the National Botanic Gardens.

Now after several years of working in this gorgeous oasis in the middle of our capital city the volunteers all feel very much a part of these Heritage Rose Gardens. We have learnt so much and I know we have made a difference in maintaining these wonderful gardens.

Anyone interested in joining one of our Horticulture Volunteer groups can apply to the National Capital Authority.

The NCA contact person is the Horticulture Volunteer Coordinator, **Danijela Spoljaric**, on 02 6272 2957.

## Future events

### *Mother's Day Fundraiser Lunch - Sunday 8 May 2011*

The Friends will be hosting a Mother's Day fundraising lunch as well as a tour of the rose gardens on 8 May 2011. Funds are needed to develop a website for the Friends of Old Parliament House Rose Gardens.

The new website will generate a better understanding of the rose gardens, its history and volunteer program. It will also encourage new members to join and continue the long standing tradition of the Friends of Old Parliament House Rose Gardens.

*More details in due course.*

### *Annual General Meeting - Monday 9 May 2011*

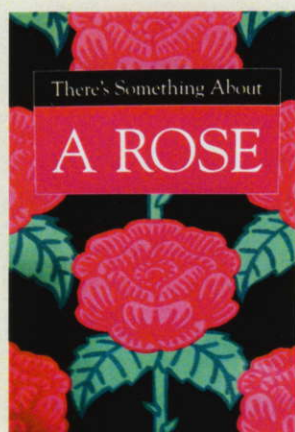
Venue: TBA

Time: 6.00pm

RSVP: [friendsophrosegardens@gmail.com](mailto:friendsophrosegardens@gmail.com)



# The perfect gift for that special occasion



Compiled and edited by  
Dr Malcolm Beazley and  
Judith Pugh.

An anthology of rose  
poems and artwork by  
Australian writers  
including Les Murray,  
Barbara Blackman, Michael  
Kirby, Chris Wallace-  
Crabbe and Anne  
Edgeworth and artists  
including Chris Dyson,  
Kristen Headlam, Tim

Maguire, Robert Mendham and Jenni Warren. With a Foreword by  
Tamie Fraser AO.

**Proceeds to support Friends of Old Parliament House Rose  
Gardens**

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## A word from our sponsor



King George Terrace,  
Parkes ACT (opposite the rose gardens of Old Parliament House)  
Ph: (02) 6273 1455

The Pork Barrel cafe has seasonal specials on offer, happy hour, live  
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### SPECIALS

#### 2 for 1 pizzas\*

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\*not valid with any other loyalty or discount offer, dine in only  
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must order the pizzas together and mention you want the special  
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30th 2011.

#### 2 for 1 coffee.. Monday to Friday before 11am\*

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