



FRIENDS OF THE OLD PARLIAMENT HOUSE ROSE GARDENS

Spring Newsletter | Issue No. 26 | August 2026

Dear Members,

Spring has arrived in the Old Parliament House Rose Gardens, and the roses are putting on their finest early show. It is a wonderful time to wander through the Macarthur Rose Garden and the Ladies Rose Garden, and we hope you'll come and enjoy the blooms over the coming months.

Rose Pruning Demonstration

We were delighted to have Nate Jennings from Green by Nature give us a demonstration on rose pruning in the rose gardens, with lots of tips and tricks learnt along the way. After the demonstration we had coffee and cake at the Courtyard Café at Old Parliament House.



Nate Jennings leading the demonstration, and members enjoying the morning together.

Changes on the Committee

Our committee continues to look for members willing to lend a hand and join our committee. From our AGM we now have a new Vice President in Mimma Memmolo, following Krysia Szkiela's stepping down for personal reasons, and we thank Krysia warmly for her contribution to the Friends over her time on the committee. We also welcome Hawari Badari, who has joined the committee.

Looking further ahead, both Jackie Warburton (President) and Heather McGregor (Secretary) have indicated they will be stepping down from their roles at the 2027/2028 AGM. This gives us good lead time to find members interested in taking on these positions, and we would love to hear from anyone keen to get more involved in keeping the Friends going. Please contact us at friendsOPHrosegardens@gmail.com if you would like to know more about what's involved.

2027: Old Parliament House Turns 100

Next year, 2027, marks 100 years since Old Parliament House first opened its doors on 9 May 1927. The Museum of Australian Democracy is already planning centenary celebrations, and we think it is a wonderful opportunity for the Friends to mark the occasion too — whether through a special planting, a garden event, or simply helping tell the story of the rose's place in the House's history. We'd love to hear members' ideas for how we might get involved; please send any thoughts through to us at the email address below.



In Memory of David J. C. Austin

We were saddened to learn of the passing of David J. C. Austin in July 2026, who for more than three decades led David Austin Roses, the family business founded by his father David C. H. Austin. Under his stewardship the company grew from a specialist nursery into one of the world's best-known rose breeders, introducing many beloved varieties along the way, including recent releases such as the King's Rose and the David Beckham Rose. Our thoughts are with his family, and with rose lovers everywhere who have enjoyed the beauty his family's roses have brought to gardens around the world, including our own.



Carols in the Garden — Save the Date

Our popular Christmas evening returns on Friday, 4 December 2026, in the beautiful surrounds of the Old Parliament House Rose Gardens, with entertainment by the Canberra Harmony Choir. Mark your calendars and spread the word — more details will follow closer to the date.



Stay in touch

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Kind regards,

The Committee, FOPHRG