

# MEDIA RELEASE

## Australian National Botanic Gardens

GPO Box 1777 Canberra ACT 2601

Telephone: (02) 62509450 Facsimile: (02) 62509599

Web site: <http://www.anbg.gov.au/anbg/>



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### *Gardens 'thrive' with a little help from the Friends!*

The Australian National Botanic Gardens has enjoyed another successful year of Summer Concerts despite the challenging weather and the fire emergency in late January.

Now in its seventh year, the Summer Concert Series presented by the *Friends of the Gardens* has seen an increasing audience over the years. According to Beverley Fisher, Treasurer of the *Friends of the Gardens*, 'It is fantastic to see a wide variety of people coming the Gardens to enjoy a night out with friends and family, while listening to great music'.

'The success of the concerts is owed to the fact that we have maintained the friendly community atmosphere of the event, with the only cost being the Gold Coin Donation collected by the *Friends* during the evening and the outstanding contribution made by *Friends of the Gardens* and Volunteers' Beverly added.

Volunteers assist with carrying out front-of-house tasks such as the setting up for the sale of wine and staffing the wine table, distributing information to the public, collecting donations and coordinating children's activities. 'The contribution of volunteers does not go unnoticed' said Beverley, 'Their efforts during this year's Concert Series have been wonderful'.

The *Friends of the Gardens* was formed in 1990 and was established to support the work of the Gardens and play an important role in assisting Gardens management to *Grow, Study and Promote Australian Plants*. Over that time, membership has gradually increased to 1200, with new *Friends* joining all the time from the Canberra region, interstate and overseas. Volunteer Guides make up a valuable part of the *Friends* organisation and conduct free daily tours of the Gardens as well as catering for specialty walks and organised booked tours throughout the year.

The *Friends* organise a popular range of tours, lectures and activities for their members and the public, including the Summer Concert Series. Funds raised by the *Friends* are directed back into Gardens projects including the design and development of new garden beds, the Fungi Website and the new plantings in the Rainforest Gully.

**Media Note:**

*Beverley Fisher has run the Friends Wine Table since the Concert's inception and has been a Friend of the Gardens for almost 10 years. She is available for an interview and for photography. Journalists should contact Cheryl Martin on 6250 9546 to arrange a suitable time.*

**Media Contact:**

**Cheryl Martin, Communications Officer**

**Ph 6250 9546**

**Fx 6250 9528**

**Mb 0418 955 661**

**Email [cheryl.martin@ea.gov.au](mailto:cheryl.martin@ea.gov.au)**