



Australian Government

Australian National Botanic Gardens

Media Release

The Australian National Botanic Gardens will unveil a plaque on site tomorrow celebrating the significant contribution made by Dr Robert Boden when he was founding Director of the Gardens.

Dr Boden's vision for Australia's premier native plant collection was as a world-class seat of learning and research, and a place for recreation and relaxation.

He was the driving force behind the construction of the Burbidge Memorial Amphitheatre which was opened in 1980 by Lady Cowan, wife of the then Governor-General, and the Visitor Information Centre which was opened in 1985 by Their Royal Highnesses, the Prince and Princess of Wales.

As well, Dr Boden instigated a centre for horticultural therapy and improved access for the disabled; the boardwalks that lead visitors through the Rainforest Gully; the café at which thousands of visitors congregate each year, the first public concert on the Eucalypt Lawn in 1983 and promoted the celebration of Wattle Day at the Gardens.

Dr Boden studied forestry at the University of Sydney and the Australian Forestry School in Canberra, later conducting research into *Eucalyptus* selection, breeding and urban forestry. His work on how some species of eucalypts cope with waterlogged soil earned him a Master of Science from the University of Sydney in 1963. Eight years later, he was awarded a Doctor of Philosophy from the Australian National University for his work on the ecological effects of changing rural land use patterns in the Canberra Region.

This led to a new career in nature conservation administration in the Australian National Parks and Wildlife Service. Dr Boden was appointed Director of the then National Botanic Gardens in 1979. During his 10-year tenure, he helped the Gardens add a conservation biology role to its existing functions of horticulture, education, interpretation and botanical science. This brought recognition to the institution in the international botanic gardens arena.

Media are invited to join Dr Boden and Gardens' staff for the **plaque unveiling on the Eucalypt Lawn.**

WHEN: **10am WEDNESDAY, 13 JULY** (please arrive 15 mins early for set-up)

WHERE: **AUSTRALIAN NATIONAL BOTANIC GARDENS**
CLUNIES ROSS STREET, ACTON

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