

A VISION SHARED

The Maud Gibson Trust
1945-1995

Karen Twigg



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FOREWORD

Within the pages of this book, an interesting story unfolds, growing from the inspiration of one person, Miss Maud Gibson, who wished to form a trust in memory of her father, to benefit the Royal Botanic Gardens in Melbourne. Her generosity was perhaps an expression of gratitude for the joy she experienced when tending her beloved garden – a desire to share that pleasure with others, in a way which would give them opportunities to further explore the mysteries of the botanical wonders of the world of nature.

It was as if a seed of a tree had been planted in the earth, and as it grew in strength and stature, branches reached out far and wide, one to further specific scientific knowledge, by an additional grant from Miss Gibson, to form a Research Trust.

This metaphorical tree, just as a living one, needed tenderers, as caretakers, dedicated people, who wholeheartedly believed in the benefactor's desires and ideals. This Trust has been singularly fortunate, from its initial meeting, to have Chairmen whose leadership, assisted by the Director of the Royal Botanic Gardens (as a Committee member), not only nurtured this tree, but fostered its growth. Their deeds in so many instances were visionary, in seeing an even wider area over which these branches could spread. An example of this was Professor Turner's desire (with great support from Committee members), to acquire land at Cranbourne, where the soil was favourable for the growing of native species, to become an annexe of the Royal Botanic Gardens. The chapter in the book relates the lengthy time frame which it took to gradually acquire sufficient land to achieve the desired acreage.

I was privileged to be a Committee member, mainly when Professor Carrick Chambers chaired the meetings, and witnessed some of the delays and frustrations, and the difficult task

of financing the acquisition of further parcels of land, whose value was rising considerably with each passing year. It was a race against time, but the determination to succeed never wavered throughout this critical stage.

The result of these efforts is what we see today – a new Botanic Garden, albeit in its infancy, which in years to come will contain indigenous plant species from all over Australia. A recent addition to this Garden has been a string of lakes which already provides beauty and tranquillity in the landscape, and a sanctuary for birds which play such a vital part in nature's fragile web of co-existence.

Along with the important scientific work in the Herbarium of collecting, pressing and recording plant specimens, was the practical encouragement given to certain botanical artists whose works continue a long and distinguished tradition, which, it could be said, started far back in history with the primitive scratchings of Palaeolithic man. Their depictions of plant species form significant records of high artistic merit and botanical veracity, in the classical manner on a white background – working in the difficult medium of water colour, which I know, 'needs the courage of a lion and the almost indiscernible touch of an angel's feather'.

This book celebrates the fiftieth anniversary of the Maud Gibson Trust and the Maud Gibson Research Trust, a story told so ably by Karen Twigg through researching the archives and the recorded minutes of the meetings. I hope it will be read by – and perhaps surprise – many people to whom the existence of the Trust was previously unknown.

However this story would not be complete without paying tribute to Mr Peter Howson (later the Hon. Peter Howson), Miss Gibson's nephew, who was appointed to the Committee, taking over from Mr Frederick Grassick in 1961, to represent the family interests. Since that year, first as a Committee member, and more recently as Chairman (since 1986), he has worked tirelessly to assist in bringing his aunt's vision, not only to fulfilment, but by wise management of the original capital sum has ensured it will go on with continued strength into the future.

I have only touched on a few aspects of the work of this Trust, but am ever conscious of the many people – those who work in the

Herbarium and those involved in the day to day management and husbandry of the Gardens – to whom we owe our gratitude.

As our city grows, and inevitably spreads, and the pace of life accelerates, along with the frets and fevers of the world, these Gardens will appear in even more striking contrast, and become havens, as echoes of woodlands, reminders of our roots in time. People will come, as they do now, but in ever-growing numbers, to admire and learn the lessons we are taught by observing the diverse beauties of nature, and hearing the music of bird-song; thereby finding refreshment for the mind and spirit through the peace and serenity within.

Joan Law-Smith

INTRODUCTION

Beginnings

On 3 July 1945, five gentlemen met around a table at 50 Market Street, Melbourne. At first glance they might have appeared an unlikely combination. The Director of the Melbourne Botanic Gardens, Alexander Jessep, sat across from Frederick Grassick, a chartered accountant, while the Professor of Botany at Melbourne University, John Turner, conversed with Sir Frederick Mann, the former Chief Justice and Lieutenant Governor of Victoria, and Russell Grimwade, a successful businessman and author of an authoritative book on the eucalypts of Australia. However, all these men shared an interest in and love of plants, and they were gathered together for the inaugural meeting of the Maud Gibson Gardens Trust.

The Maud Gibson Gardens Trust was established by Miss Maud Gibson in 1945 as a memorial to her father, William Gibson, a founder of the firm of Foy and Gibson in Melbourne. Although Miss Gibson's principal residence was overseas, she wanted to provide an endowment to the city which had given her father such prosperity. After discussing the needs of the Gardens at length with Grassick, she contributed a settlement of £20,000 in securities for the 'maintenance, development, replacement, increase and improvement of the flora in the Melbourne Botanic Gardens or otherwise for the benefit of such gardens'. This allowed the trust an initial return of approximately £1,200 a year.¹

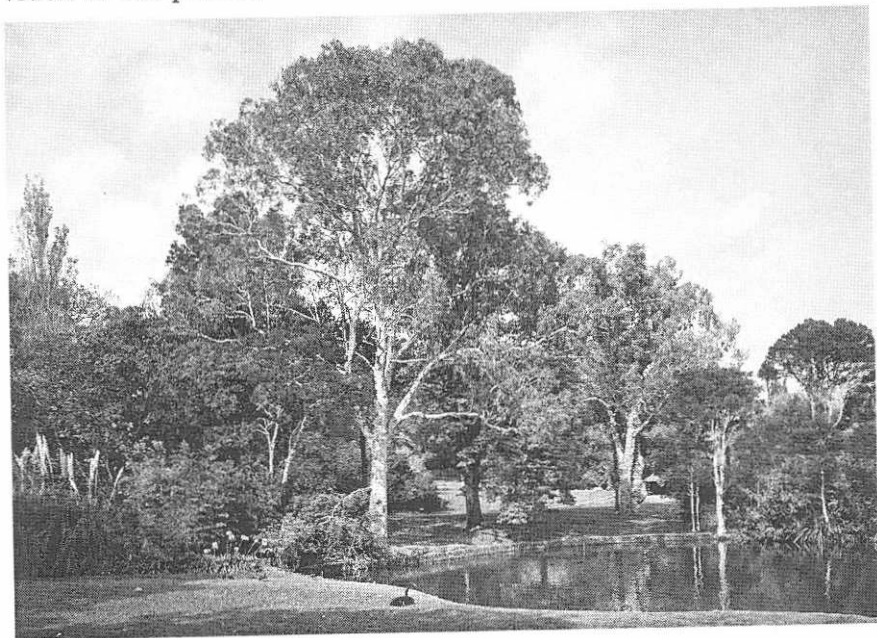
The trust deed specified that a special committee was to be appointed to advise the trustee company² regarding the expenditure of money. The membership was to comprise the Director of

¹ F. Grassick to Director, Arnold Arboretum, 3 January 1946

² Ballarat Trustees Executors and Agency Company Limited

the Botanic Gardens, the Professor of Botany at the University of Melbourne and three other members selected for their interest in landscape gardening or in plants and trees. Grassick was appointed to provide liaison between the committee and the trustee company.

The Botanic Gardens which the new committee sought to benefit, had been established as early as 1845 in a swampy area bordered by scrub. Over the ensuing years it had been transformed into a place of great beauty, with mature trees spread across sloping lawns, colourful garden beds and shrubberies, curving paths and a string of lakes. The scientific centre of these gardens was the National Herbarium, founded in 1853 by Dr. F. Mueller,³ Government Botanist, and later a director of the gardens. Here dried plant specimens, primarily from Victoria and Australia but also from overseas, were collected and stored,⁴ taxonomic research was conducted, and plant identification advice was provided to the public.⁵



Royal Botanic Gardens, Melbourne, c. 1990.

The Maud Gibson Trust was established in 1945 for the 'maintenance, development, replacement, increase and improvement' of the flora in the Melbourne Botanic Gardens. (*Royal Botanic Gardens, Library*)

³ Later to become Baron Ferdinand von Mueller

⁴ By 1984 these specimens numbered approximately one million. See Joan Law-Smith, *The Royal Botanic Gardens*, Melbourne, 1984, p.79

⁵ Joan Law-Smith, *The Royal Botanic Gardens*, Melbourne, 1984, p.79

Policy

Although the first meeting of the Maud Gibson Gardens Trust Committee successfully brought together five prominent Melbourne men and presented them with the task of working together to advance the Botanic Gardens, it was initially difficult to know where to begin. The clauses which made up the trust's charter were extremely broad (see Appendix 1), and so the Committee decided that their first assignment must be to establish a list of priorities and a solid basis from which they could operate.

Some matters of policy became clear at an early stage. The first was that the Trust Committee would make no attempt to interfere with the administrative role of the Director of the Botanic Gardens, but would rather assist him with nominated projects. Secondly, it was deemed important that expenditure should always be on activities that would not normally be covered by the Government.⁶ In later years this approach was enlarged so that the Trust Committee often financed activities that they believed the Government might be encouraged to fund in the future once their worth had been proven.

Funding priorities were also influenced by the interests and specialist knowledge of individual members of the Trust Committee. In such a way Professor Turner, recognising his students' urgent need of a botanical handbook, inspired the committee to support the compilation of a Flora of Victoria, while Russell Grimwade, with his passion for native flora, initiated the first action toward a native plant annexe.

Scientific Research

In an attempt to redress the way in which the scientific role of the Botanic Gardens had been neglected in the past, the Trust Committee also sought to give priority to projects of a scientific nature, in particular work conducted at the National Herbarium. Members expressed the view that it was the scientific work carried out in a botanic garden that distinguished it from a fine municipal garden, and three-quarters of the £9,811 spent by the Trust between 1945 and 1956 was expended on projects that contributed to science.⁷

⁶ University of Melbourne Archives, Professor Turner's papers, LS 7/24-29/-Box 25B, J. S. Turner to Secretary for Lands, 1956.

⁷ The exact amount was £7,270. University of Melbourne Archives, Professor Turner's Papers, LS 7/24-29/- Box 25B, J. S. Turner to Secretary for Lands, 1956.

Botanic Gardens Branch Research Committee

In 1965 the Trust Committee's commitment to scientific research found further expression in the formation of the Botanic Gardens Branch Research Committee, after Miss Maud Gibson indicated that she wished to give £10,000 to the Botanic Gardens to be spent on 'anything you would like to suggest in the way of an addition to the Gardens'.⁸ The Trust Committee was delighted and initially intended to use the money to purchase long-overdue storage cabinets for the National Herbarium. However, before this could be put into effect the Government unexpectedly announced its own intention to provide new storage systems for the herbarium.

As a result it was decided to establish a second trust fund to be devoted to scientific research and to be administered by a research committee known as the Botanic Gardens Branch Research Committee. This committee would be composed of members capable of directing research – in the opinion of the Executive of the CSIRO – in order to qualify as an 'approved research institute' under Section 73A of the Income Tax Act, with eligibility for tax deductions.⁹

The first meeting of the new Research Committee took place on 5 November 1965. With the exception of Dr Carrick Chambers, Senior Lecturer in Botany at the University of Melbourne, the appointed members of the Research Committee were already members of the Trust Committee.¹⁰ In fact the two bodies operated very much in tandem although their source of funding was different. Meetings were usually held together, although until 1986 minutes were kept separately, and those who were not official members of each Committee were listed as present 'by invitation'. From this point funding for scientific research projects was typically provided by the Research Branch while all other activities were financed by the trust.

⁸ *Research Committee Minutes*, 5 November 1965.

⁹ *Research Committee Minutes*, 5 November 1965.

¹⁰ The remaining members of the Research Committee were John Turner (Professor of Botany at the University of Melbourne), Sir Samuel Wadham (Professor Emeritus), Richard Pescott (Director of the Royal Botanic Gardens) and Peter Howson (Federal Minister for Air).

Vision

Both the Trust and the Research Committees were fortunate in attracting men and women with great vision and a willingness to embark on major projects where tangible results were not immediately evident. Three of the trust's major achievements – the compilation of a handbook on Victorian flora, the launch of a regular botanical journal and the establishment of a native plant annexe – were first proposed and discussed at only the second meeting of the Trust Committee in July 1945, but took many more years to bring to fruition. Those who were invited to join the committees typically continued to serve for many years, contributing stability and the weight of their experience to the trust. Not all could compete with stalwarts like Professor John Turner and Dame Elisabeth Murdoch who were members of the Trust Committee for twenty-eight years, or the Hon. Peter Howson who in 1995 was in his thirty fourth year as a Trust Committee member. Nevertheless the average length of membership on the Trust Committee stands at eleven years.

The committees benefited from the fact that their members were active in a variety of fields and possessed an extensive network of acquaintances, particularly in the political arena. This frequently allowed the opportunity for informal discussion with key decision makers: the thin correspondence file kept in the trust's archives reflects the committees' preference for discussing matters face to face if at all possible. Apart from direct lobbying, the committees also performed a significant advisory function in their relationship with government.

PUBLICATIONS

Melbourne's Garden

Since 1946 was the centenary year of the formation of the Melbourne Botanic Gardens, the Trust Committee decided to spend the first year's income on the production of a memorial book, envisaged as both a pictorial and descriptive record of the gardens. The well-known naturalist Crosbie Morrison was appointed compiler and editor for a total remuneration of £250, while the Melbourne Camera Club and the Photographic Society of Victoria were invited to submit photographs.¹¹

The title of the book – *Melbourne's Garden* – was intended to suggest the garden's great popularity amongst the public, and when printed, in December 1946, comprised 153 pages with over a hundred quality black-and-white photographs. It was a handsome volume and proved to have enormous publicity value for the gardens. One hundred copies were sent to overseas herbaria and botanic gardens as far afield as Capetown and Geneva,¹² while further copies were presented to distinguished overseas visitors to the gardens. *Melbourne's Garden* also sold well to the general public, and although 2,100 copies had been printed,¹³ by 1949 less than five hundred of these remained.¹⁴ A second edition was published in January 1957.

Plants of Victoria

During an early meeting of the Trust Committee, when members were asked to outline priority uses for trust funds, Professor Turner stressed the need for a standard handbook on Victorian flora, which would set out basic scientific knowledge of the plants of Victoria, both native and introduced, in an easily referable

¹¹ *Trust Committee Minutes*, 26 September 1945. No payment appears to have been made for these photographs.

¹² *Trust Committee Minutes*, 5 November 1947.

¹³ *Annual Report*, 1953.

¹⁴ *Trust Committee Minutes*, 2 November 1949.

form.¹⁵ The first book on the flora of Victoria had been put together by Baron Ferdinand von Mueller and published in 1885–8. This was superseded in 1930 by *Flora of Victoria*, compiled by Alfred James Ewart, Professor of Botany at the University of Melbourne, but it, too, was now outdated and difficult to obtain.¹⁶

In 1947 the Trust Committee agreed that Jim Willis, senior staff member of the National Herbarium and a former president of the Field Naturalists' Society, should be approached to compile the handbook.¹⁷ It was agreed that he would continue to work at the herbarium, but the trust would pay the salary of a graduate assistant to allow him to devote much of his time to the handbook.¹⁸

When Willis commenced work in 1948 it was hoped that the new handbook might be completed in two years. It rapidly became clear that such a forecast was wildly optimistic. After two years there was still an enormous amount to be done and Willis explained to the Trust Committee that he had never imagined the handbook would require so much original research. He had found that almost every one of the eight hundred genera required further investigation and field work.¹⁹ While acknowledging the immensity of the task, the committee also recognised that Willis was, by nature, a perfectionist, and suggested that compromise might be necessary in the light of the urgent demand for the handbook from students and others.²⁰

In 1955 the handbook was still incomplete. Since the trust continued to pay for an assistant to Willis, more than half the amount which the Trust Committee had at its disposal annually was being spent on the handbook. In the light of this, committee member Mr A. Michell proposed that funding be suspended but after much discussion his proposal was defeated. Professor Turner argued in a spirited fashion:

¹⁵ *Trust Committee Minutes*, 18 July 1945.

¹⁶ *Annual Report*, 1957–8.

¹⁷ *Trust Committee Minutes*, 2 April 1947.

¹⁸ *Trust Committee Minutes*, 5 November 1947.

¹⁹ *Trust Committee Minutes*, 10 January 1951.

²⁰ *Trust Committee Minutes*, 10 January 1951.

*Each year we have sixty students...who should own a copy of an up-to-date and reliable flora. Apart from these, there are school teachers, agriculturists and foresters already in the service, and amateurs. It is in fact the primary duty of a Herbarium to carry out research on the flora of its State and to produce a working handbook. For this reason I regard the expenditure to date on the Willis book as amply justified and of more value than any other of our projects.*²¹

In 1958 Willis travelled to England for twelve months, on the basis of an exchange arrangement with the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew and a grant from the Nuffield Foundation, and took up the position of the Australian Botanical Liaison Officer. The Trust Committee provided travelling and living expenses²² since it was hoped that the trip would allow him to finalise many matters relating to the handbook by referring to early Australian collections in the Kew Herbarium, British Museum and other European herbaria.²³ In fact the period Willis spent at Kew did enable him to bring many parts of the handbook to conclusion and before he left England he was able to place the manuscript of volume one with printers in Edinburgh.

In September 1962, *Plants in Victoria, Volume One*, came off the press. The book that had been intended for completion in two years, but had taken fourteen years, was finally launched.²⁴ The Trust Committee then faced another long delay while volume two was prepared for publication. Although Willis initially predicted it would be ready for the printers by the following year, this time the committee was not unduly surprised to find it taking much longer. In fact *Plants in Victoria, Volume Two* was finally completed a decade later in 1972. Although it had been a long wait, the public was finally rewarded with an authoritative and scientifically accurate handbook, in two volumes, that rapidly became indispensable to all those interested in the study of Victorian botany.

²¹ J. S. Turner to Mr Michell, 10 June 1955.

²² *Annual Report*, 1957–8.

²³ *Annual Report*, 1957–8.

²⁴ The trust was assisted in meeting the publication cost of £7,500 by a grant of £3,000 from the Government.



Dr. J. H. Willis plants a seedling (*Eucalyptus willisii*) at Cheltenham Park, Victoria accompanied by the Mayor of Moorabbin, 1985.

Willis compiled a much needed standard handbook on Victorian flora, *Plants of Victoria, Volume One and Two*, 1962 and 1972, with funding from the Maud Gibson Trust. (*Standard Newspapers*, 1 September 1985)

Orchids of Australia

In 1946 committee member Russell Grimwade suggested that assistance should be given to Will Nicholls, a landscape draughtsman with the Footscray City Council, who was compiling a complete illustrated description of the orchidaceous plants of Australia.²⁵ A true enthusiast with only primary school education, Nicholls had taught himself drawing and painting so he could sketch orchid specimens, and sufficient Latin to present formal diagnoses for the new orchid species he discovered.

Moreover much of his leisure time was spent on this project: he coaxed rare tropical orchids to grow under glass in order to sketch them²⁶ and frequently devoted his holidays to collecting excursions. He was reputed to disdain the usual collecting gear, instead carrying home special orchid trophies under the capacious crown of his hat.²⁷ Even at work he religiously devoted half an hour every day, during his lunch break, to painstakingly drawing and colouring the flowers he had collected.²⁸

²⁵ *Trust Committee Minutes*, 5 June 1946.

²⁶ Preface, July 1950, *Orchids of Australia*, p. v.

²⁷ Foreword, *Orchids of Australia*, p. ix.

²⁸ Correspondence file, 15 December 1949.

Nicholls had made this project his life work and he wrote:

*there is no possibility of me losing interest in the fascinating flowers, for I intend (if possible) to put them on paper at every opportunity during the remaining days ahead, thus giving to future workers in this sphere, some foundation to work upon.*²⁹

However he was now sixty-one years old and was becoming afraid that his death might prevent the completion of the project.³⁰ Since he was well known to Professor Turner and to the director, Alexander Jessep, who both verified the quality of his work, the Trust Committee offered him £400 for the purposes of interstate collecting and to accelerate the completion of his work, on the condition that he bequeathed his pressed orchid collection to the herbarium.³¹

The grant from the Trust Committee enabled Nicholls to take two trips to Western Australia and collect many localised and rare orchid species. He also used some of the money to defray the postage on specimens sent to him from other states. By 1950 Nicholls had completed almost five hundred orchid portraits, with a sheet of descriptive text accompanying each illustration, and had obtained an undertaking from Georgian House to publish the work in over twenty parts.³²

Unfortunately Nicholls' premonition proved correct and he passed away in 1951, before the first portion of his book came off the printing press. Georgian House eventually abandoned the project as uneconomical but much later, in 1969, Thomas Nelson (Australia) Limited published all Nicholls' illustrations and descriptions in a single volume entitled simply *Orchids of Australia*.³³ The Nicholls collection of orchids passed to the National Herbarium.

Muelleria

At the very first Trust Committee meeting on 3 July 1945, Jessep suggested that the trust might provide financial assis-

²⁹ Correspondence file, W. H. Nicholls to Maud Gibson Trust, 15 December 1949.

³⁰ Correspondence file, 4 July 1947.

³¹ *Trust Committee Minutes*, 3 July 1946.

³² *Trust Committee Minutes*, 3 May 1950.

³³ Foreword, *Orchids of Australia*, p. ix.

tance towards the cost of a periodical journal of the National Herbarium.³⁴ This would give staff of the herbarium an opportunity to publish their research while also accommodating papers from other sources. He continued to raise the matter periodically until finally in 1951 it was resolved that the trust would finance the first issue of a Botanic Gardens scientific journal to be called *Muelleria*.

Jessep took responsibility for soliciting articles and the first issue of *Muelleria* appeared in August 1955 – a fitting swan song for the director, who retired only a few months later. About 250 copies were distributed to Australian and overseas herbaria and institutions, and to botanists, and these met with a good response.³⁵

Having financed the first issue of *Muelleria* at a cost of £400, the trust recommended that all future issues should properly be the responsibility of the State Government.³⁶ This was agreed and the second issue of *Muelleria*, which appeared in December 1959, was Government funded. Since 1971, *Muelleria* has been produced annually, and is now circulated to four hundred individuals and institutions in Australia and to fifty-five overseas countries.³⁷

Guide Book – Pescott

Guide books to the Botanic Gardens had been produced at intervals since last century, and although *Melbourne's Garden* partly fulfilled this function, it was too expensive for the average visitor. At the end of the 1950s the new Director of the Botanic Gardens, Richard Pescott, undertook to complete a new guide and souvenir booklet of the gardens. This was a much more modest publication than Morrison's book, comprising only fifteen pages and a little over twenty photographs. It was printed in 1961 with assistance from the trust³⁸ and was an immediate success. Of the ten thousand copies printed, half were sold in the first two years.³⁹ It was reprinted in 1966.⁴⁰

³⁴ *Trust Committee Minutes*, 3 July 1945.

³⁵ *Trust Committee Minutes*, 17 April 1956.

³⁶ *Trust Committee Minutes*, 12 December 1957.

³⁷ *Muelleria*, volume 8, number 3, May 1995.

³⁸ *Trust Committee Minutes*, 2 March 1961.

³⁹ *Trust Committee Minutes*, 2 March 1961 and *Annual Report* 1961–3

⁴⁰ *Trust Committee Minutes*, 28 March 1966.

The success enjoyed by the guide book encouraged Pescott to embark upon a full scale history of the Botanic Gardens following his retirement in 1970. The history was launched in December 1981 under the title *Royal Botanic Gardens – A History from 1845–1970*⁴¹ and the Trust Committee voted the sum of \$5,000 towards the cost of its publication by Oxford University Press.⁴²

Guide Book – Lady Law-Smith

By the end of the 1970s the Trust Committee was again considering the need for a new guide book with more photographs than had been possible in Pescott's book.⁴³ After much discussion of the appropriate format and editor, it was finally pointed out that one of the Trust Committee's own members, Lady Law-Smith, wrote with great sensitivity and possessed the rare ability of being able to bring text to life.⁴⁴ Lady Law-Smith subsequently agreed to write the new guidebook and also took responsibility for many aspects of its production. In particular she went to considerable trouble to find a suitable photographer and her efforts were rewarded when Elaine Herbert was commissioned by the trust and produced almost ninety full colour photographs for publication.

The new book, entitled simply *The Royal Botanic Gardens Melbourne*, was published in 1984. Lady Law-Smith's text, written from 'a gardener's point of view...not a trained botanist',⁴⁵ and Elaine Herbert's superb photographs made the book instantly popular.⁴⁶

Other Publications

The Trust Committee also provided financial assistance for a variety of other publications, mainly botanical in nature. These included a subsidy toward the publication of two supplements of the *Victorian Naturalist Journal* in 1957 containing descriptions of a total of forty-five new species,⁴⁷ and a contribution of \$1,000 in 1982 toward the publication of *Fern Flora of Victoria*,

⁴¹ *Trust Committee Minutes*, 9 December 1981.

⁴² *Research Committee Minutes*, 23 August 1979.

⁴³ *Trust Committee Minutes*, 26 May 1977.

⁴⁴ *Trust Committee Minutes*, 29 April 1982.

⁴⁵ *The Royal Botanic Gardens Melbourne*, Joan Law-Smith, 1984, p. 2.

⁴⁶ *Trust Committee Minutes*, 29 March 1984.

⁴⁷ *Trust Committee Minutes*, 4 March 1957.

Tasmania and South Australia by Betty Duncan and Golda Isaacs, who had conducted much of their research at the National Herbarium.⁴⁸ The sum of \$5,000 was also granted to the Australian Systematic Botany Society in 1989 to help publish proceedings of the 1988 symposium on the 'Development of Systematic Botany in Australia'.⁴⁹

In 1966, the Research Committee approved funding (initially the sum of £800) to provide research assistance to National Herbarium staff member, Helen Aston, who was working toward the compilation of a book on the aquatic angiosperms of Victoria.⁵⁰ Aston was so grateful for this financial support that after her book, entitled *Aquatic Plants of Victoria*, was published in 1973 she donated all royalties to the trust.⁵¹

Films

Frederick Grassick first suggested the trust might fund a short film of the Botanic Gardens in 1947.⁵² The Trust Committee agreed that this would provide valuable publicity for the gardens, and the Visual Aids Centre of the University of Melbourne was subsequently commissioned to produce a twenty-minute 16 mm colour film. Committee members had the opportunity to view the work in progress and much discussion centred around the producer's penchant for detailed views of flowers, particularly roses and pansies, which Trust Committee members argued should be shortened in favour of landscape views.⁵³ The film was finally completed with six reprints in 1950⁵⁴ and copies were sent to the Education Department, the State Film Centre, the NSW Film Council and the Central Film Library.⁵⁵

Thirty-five years later, in 1985, the Trust Committee approved funds of \$5,000 for a second film, this time focused on the National Herbarium and its functions.⁵⁶

⁴⁸ *Trust Committee Minutes*, 29 July 1982.

⁴⁹ *Trust Committee Minutes*, 25 May 1989.

⁵⁰ *Research Committee Minutes*, 16 December 1965.

⁵¹ *Trust Committee Minutes*, 23 November 1978.

⁵² *Trust Committee Minutes*, 4 June 1947.

⁵³ *Trust Committee Minutes*, 13 April 1949, 6 September 1950.

⁵⁴ *Trust Committee Minutes*, 6 September 1950.

⁵⁵ *Trust Committee Minutes*, 6 July 1954.

⁵⁶ *Trust Committee Minutes*, 29 August 1985.

DR MELVILLE

Invitation

In 1951 Professor Turner suggested to the committee that they might invite a senior member of the staff at the herbarium in the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew to visit Australia for an extended period of time and work in collaboration with the National Herbarium staff on Australian flora. Given Australia's distance from many of the world's major herbariums, he considered that such a visit would provide staff with the opportunity to observe the latest techniques in taxonomy and herbarium work and give an impetus to scientific research generally, while also giving the visitor experience in Australian field work.⁵⁷

In consultation with Sir Edward Salisbury, the Director of the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, it was arranged that Dr R. Melville, botanist in charge of the Australian section of the Kew Herbarium, would travel to Australia for a year to be attached to the staff of the National Herbarium. Melville's salary would continue to be paid by Kew while his travelling expenses to and from Australia and his botanical excursions in the field while here, would be defrayed by the trust.⁵⁸ It was initially envisaged that the visit would take place on an exchange basis with Jim Willis travelling to Kew. However, due to Willis's commitment to completing the Victorian flora handbook, the trust decided to defer this exchange to a later date.⁵⁹

Preparations

The Trust Committee viewed Melville's visit as an occasion of some significance. It was the first time a systematic botanist from overseas had been invited to work on Australian flora and they felt it was important that he return to Kew – the centre of

⁵⁷ *Trust Committee Minutes*, 4 July 1951.

⁵⁸ *Trust Committee Minutes*, 19 September 1951.

⁵⁹ *Trust Committee Minutes*, 1 August 1951.

taxonomic botany and a research facility for botanists from all over the world – with a good impression of the assistance given to him by the trust. Jessep argued this might even lead to further requests from overseas botanists to visit and work at the National Herbarium, Victoria.⁶⁰ With this in mind the trust approved the purchase of a special binocular microscope, a self-drawing dissecting microscope and other optical instruments (at a cost of over £300) to be used by Melville during his visit, but eventually to become the property of the National Herbarium.⁶¹

Itinerary

Jessep also took great pains in arranging Melville's field itinerary – a difficult task because efforts had to be made to be at the right place at the appropriate flowering season.⁶² Moreover since the director could not afford to have a staff member accompanying Melville on every field trip, he had to arrange with local naturalists to take the overseas botanist on collecting tours of their locality.

In the event Melville was given plenty of opportunity for collecting. After disembarking at Fremantle, Western Australia on 31 July 1952, and spending a week each in Western Australia and South Australia, and three weeks surveying the botany of New South Wales and the Australian Capital Territory, he travelled extensively in Victoria, making botanical visits to the Kaniva and Dimboola district, Bendigo and Castlemaine, Portland, the Grampians, East Gippsland, Mt Buffalo and the Alpine area.⁶³ Later in his visit Melville also visited Tasmania.

It was no doubt helpful that Melville proved to be an energetic, likeable man described by Jessep as a 'good mixer' and 'genial chap' with a seemingly inexhaustible passion for collecting that quickly endeared him to fellow field collectors.⁶⁴ Since the trust's funds rarely stretched to motor transport, much of the collecting was done on foot during long day hikes. This did not seem to trouble Melville who had great physical stamina, prompting Jessep to write with some admiration, 'He is sound of limb and good in the wind so he can get about fairly quickly' although he

also warned those accompanying him, 'He is a very solid collector and his parcels gradually get heavy'.⁶⁵

During these field trips Melville collected about 2,500 different species of Australian plants. Five sets of each specimen were taken: one for the National Herbarium, one for the Sydney Herbarium, one for the Kew Herbarium and the other two apportioned between the Botanic Gardens of Perth, Adelaide and Hobart.⁶⁶ Jessep found that not only did Dr Melville's prodigious collecting on field trips result in heavy loads, but that the drying of specimens, changing of papers and storage demanded a great deal of time from his junior staff.⁶⁷ Certainly he could have been excused for breathing a sigh of relief when the field trips were completed, allowing Melville to spend the last part of his visit in a quieter fashion, working at the National Herbarium investigating the taxonomy of Australian plants. In addition he gave numerous slide talks on the subject of the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew. The trust's minutes also record plans for radio interviews, an article in the *Age* and talks at the Town Hall and the University of Melbourne.⁶⁸

Departure

Melville finally left Australia in July 1953 and was farewelled at an afternoon tea arranged by the Trust Committee.⁶⁹ Before his departure he compiled a report containing suggestions for the improvement of the National Herbarium and Botanic Gardens. One of his major recommendations related to the inadequacy of storage at the herbarium and drew attention to the damage that was being done to specimens which were stored vertically in tied bundles rather than horizontally as loose sheets. Other important recommendations included the need for increased field work to many parts of Victoria, the desirability of acquiring aerial photographs and large scale Victorian maps for charting plant distribution, and the importance of educating the public concerning the beauty and horticultural possibilities of native flora. Melville's report was carefully considered by the Trust

⁶⁰ Correspondence file, 9 May 1952.

⁶¹ Secretary for Lands from Jessep, 3 February 1953.

⁶² *Trust Committee Minutes*, 28 August 1952.

⁶³ *Trust Committee Minutes*, 8 October 1952, and itinerary in Melville file.

⁶⁴ Letter to Mr Howard, Lands Office, Portland from Jessep, 6 October 1952.

⁶⁵ Letter to Mr W. Perry, Eaglehawk, from Jessep, 19 September 1952.

⁶⁶ *Trust Committee Minutes*, 14 January 1953.

⁶⁷ Correspondence file, 8 October 1952: report on Melville's visit by Jessep.

⁶⁸ *Trust Committee Minutes*, 14 January 1953.

⁶⁹ *Trust Committee Minutes*, 23 June 1953.

Committee, and many of its recommendations became the basis for future action.⁷⁰

Strong Links

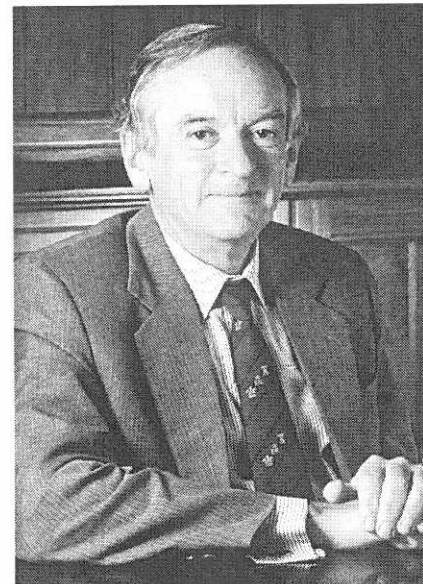
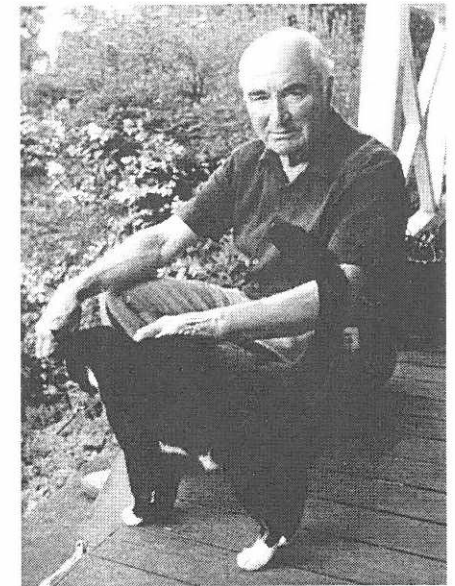
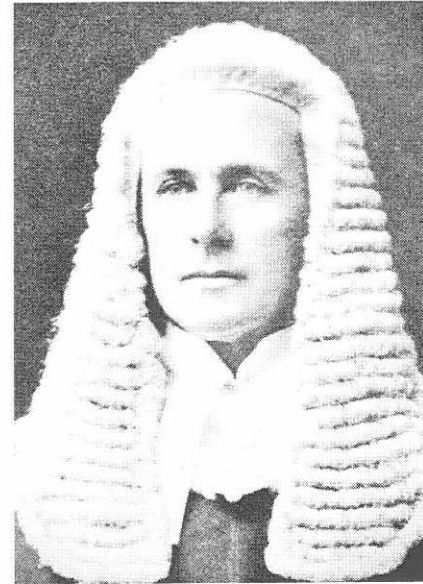
There were other less tangible results from Melville's visit. A cross-fertilisation of ideas took place as he worked side by side with herbarium staff and strong links were forged between the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew and the Botanic Gardens, Victoria. The success of Dr Melville's visit led to a reciprocal visit by Jim Willis in 1958, and in following years this exchange scheme flourished, with botanists from herbaria and gardens across Australia arranging exchanges with Kew.

The next to travel from Melbourne was Mr A. B. Court, senior botanist at the National Herbarium, who was appointed Liaison Officer at the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew in 1966, the Trust Committee contributing £600 to assist with his expenses.⁷¹ In 1964–5, Sir George Taylor, Director of the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew also visited Melbourne and was entertained by the Trust Committee who spent some time discussing with him the problems associated with their Botanic Gardens.⁷²

⁷⁰ Report on Australian Herbaria with special reference to Melbourne, 22 June 1953, by R. Melville.

⁷¹ *Trust Committee Minutes*, 10 July 1959.

⁷² *Annual Report*, 1964–5



The four chairmen of the Maud Gibson Trust Committee.

(From top, left to right):

Sir Frederick Mann, Chairman from 1945–1952

(*High Court of Australia*)

Professor John Turner, Chairman from 1952–1973 (*Mrs John Turner*)

(From bottom, left to right):

Professor Carrick Chambers, Chairman from 1974–1986

(*Royal Botanic Gardens, Sydney – Jaime Plaza*)

Hon. Peter Howson, Chairman from 1986– (*Mrs Marshall Baillieu*)

BOTANICAL ART

Alpine Handbook

The trust has played an important role in nurturing and advancing the careers of botanical artists in Victoria. The first suggestion that the Trust Committee should interest themselves in botanical illustrations came from Professor Turner in 1947. Each year Turner led a party of staff and students on an extended field trip to the Bogong High Plains and he was concerned that most Victorians were ignorant of the beauty of alpine vegetation. He therefore proposed a small, illustrated handbook on alpine flowers, preferably with colour plates, designed for the average person, and calculated to encourage the cultivation of alpine plants in home gardens.⁷³

Margaret Stones

Frederick Grassick had previously alerted the Trust Committee to the very finely executed botanical drawings of Margaret Stones, a nurse with some art training who had turned to botanical drawing in 1945 when she was confined to bed with an illness and began to draw the flowers placed beside her sick bed.⁷⁴ The trust approached Stones and she completed nine paintings of Victorian alpine plants for the proposed alpine plant handbook. For these the trust paid £30.⁷⁵ Encouraged by this and other commissions, Stones moved to London in 1951 to study both botany and botanical drawing at the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew where she had the honour of becoming principal contributing artist to *Curtis's Botanical Magazine* from 1958 to 1982.⁷⁶

⁷³ Letter from Professor John Turner to Sir Frederick Mann, correspondence 11 October 1947.

⁷⁴ The Royal Botanic Gardens library biographical file, Margaret Stones.

⁷⁵ *Trust Committee Minutes*, 14 January 1953.

⁷⁶ The Royal Botanic Gardens library biographical file, Margaret Stones.

Lack of Botanical Illustrations

After Margaret Stones' commission little more was done by the Trust Committee towards the acquisition of botanical art until 1962 when the director, Richard Pescott, returned from a six-month trip to Europe and Britain. His report, based on his observations of overseas gardens and herbaria, included a strong recommendation for the employment of a botanical artist on the herbarium staff:

*the lack of accurate drawings both in black and white and in colour, of our native plants is an outstanding omission in our botanical literature and records and should be corrected as soon as possible. When it's realised that there are approximately 3,000 native plants in Victoria and 20,000 in Australia waiting to be figured, the task is a large one.*⁷⁷

The Trust Committee responded by allocating the sum of £1,000 to enable the herbarium to commission artwork.⁷⁸ As a matter of policy it was decided to aim for one colour painting of each genus in natural size, and one black and white drawing of each species of Victorian plant with some diagnostic botanical detail included.⁷⁹ In 1966, after examining many samples of work, the Trust Committee decided to commission work from Coralie Whitby, an East Bentleigh school teacher, Betty Conabere, a Mansfield art teacher, and Celia Rosser, trained as an advertising artist and now rearing a family at Camperdown. Paintings were also commissioned from Margaret Stones, although her reputation had grown to such an extent that the trust felt they could only afford five paintings at a cost of fifty guineas a painting.⁸⁰ The choice of species to be painted was left in the hands of Pescott and Willis.

The trust's commission provided these artists, most of whom were relatively unknown, with unexpected opportunity and the quality of the resulting work confirmed the value of the trust's initiative.⁸¹

⁷⁷ Report by the director on visit to England and Europe, April to November 1962.

⁷⁸ *Research Committee Minutes*, 16 December 1965

⁷⁹ *Research Committee Minutes*, 28 March 1966.

⁸⁰ *Research Committee Minutes*, 28 March 1966.

⁸¹ *Research Committee Minutes*, 28 July 1983.

Celia Rosser

In 1967 Celia Rosser was given the task of painting the six Victorian banksia species. She completed this in 1970⁸² but even as early as 1968 the high standard of her work was evident and the Trust Committee asked her to paint an appropriate banksia for presentation to Miss Maud Gibson.⁸³ Following this commission she was appointed as Science Faculty artist at Monash University in 1970 and in 1974 began the task that no botanical artist had ever accomplished before, of painting all the species of a major plant genus – in this case the banksia, consisting of approximately seventy-eight species.

Betty Conabere

Betty Conabere at Mansfield was commissioned to provide paintings of alpine plants to be the basis for the illustrated handbook on alpine flora, the same handbook on which Margaret Stones had worked twenty years earlier.⁸⁴ After intensive work over a period of eighteen months, Conabere presented fifty complete paintings to the Trust Committee in August 1969.⁸⁵ Although the handbook itself never eventuated, the paintings provided an important record of alpine flora and became a significant part of the herbarium's art collection.⁸⁶ Thirty-one of these paintings continue to be held by the Royal Botanic Gardens library. Conabere went on to prepare 375 illustrations for a book entitled *Wildflowers of South-eastern Australia* (1974).

Visit by Margaret Stones

Meanwhile the trust continued to follow with interest the advancing career of Margaret Stones in England, and when she proposed a visit back to Victoria in 1975, the Trust Committee agreed to underwrite the visit by \$3,000 on the understanding that she produce a number of paintings for the trust while in Australia.⁸⁷ The trust also part-funded a retrospective exhibition at the University of Melbourne to coincide with her visit, and included paintings held at the Herbarium.⁸⁸ During her visit Stones completed five large scale and eleven small scale paint-

⁸² *Research Committee Minutes*, 18 December 1970.

⁸³ *Research Committee Minutes*, 10 November 1967.

⁸⁴ *Research Committee Minutes*, 10 November 1967.

⁸⁵ *Research Committee Minutes*, 7 August 1969.

⁸⁶ *Research Committee Minutes*, 16 February 1970.

⁸⁷ *Research Committee Minutes*, 15 August 1974.

⁸⁸ *Trust Committee Minutes*, 26 June 1975.

ings for the trust based on the flora of the Western Basalt Plains.⁸⁹ These can still be viewed at the Royal Botanic Gardens library. Her work received so much publicity that the Commonwealth Bureau of Statistics asked the trust for permission to publish four of her paintings in the 1977 Victorian Year Book.⁹⁰

Botanical Artist

The impetus given to botanical art by Stones' visit prompted Trust Committee members to discuss again the need for a botanical artist on the herbarium staff. The trust continued to provide funding for artists on a temporary basis while making representations to the Government on the need for a permanent staff appointment. During 1975–6, the trust paid Mr C. E. Woolcock of Portland to carry out line drawings of Victorian flora⁹¹ and during 1977 Joy Martin, a PhD student, was employed to produce illustrations of species of *Rutaceae*.⁹² Eventually the efforts of the trust bore fruit and in 1977 the Government agreed to fund the appointment of Anita Podwyszynski as botanical artist and Joy Martin as supervising botanist.⁹³

In 1977 Anita Podwyszynski commenced work on an ambitious illustrated flora of Victoria to be part-funded by the trust and used for species identification in conjunction with Willis's handbook. By 1991 she had completed approximately eight hundred illustrations of Victoria's indigenous plants,⁹⁴ although the focus of the project had changed. It was no longer considered feasible to publish a complete illustrated flora but instead it was intended that her work be published in the new four-volume *Flora of Victoria* to replace Willis's handbook. Indeed in 1994 some of her illustrative work appeared in volume two of the new *Flora*.⁹⁵ Anita Barley (nee Podwyszynski) left the Herbarium in 1992 but most of her illustrations are still held by the Royal Botanic Gardens library.⁹⁶

⁸⁹ *Trust Committee Minutes*, 23 October 1975.

⁹⁰ *Trust Committee Minutes*, 16 February 1976, 24 February 1977.

⁹¹ *Research Committee Minutes*, 24 April 1975 and 27 May 1975.

⁹² *Research Committee Minutes*, 24 February 1977.

⁹³ *Trust Committee Minutes*, 26 May 1977.

⁹⁴ Information from Helen Cohn, librarian. These illustrations are stored in the Royal Botanic Gardens library.

⁹⁵ The Royal Botanic Gardens library biographical file, Anita Podwyszynski.

⁹⁶ Many of the botanical illustrations mentioned in the text are held at the Royal Botanic Gardens library and an arrangement may be made to view them through librarian, Helen Cohn.

Postcards and Prints

The production of botanical art proceeded hand in hand with its popular dissemination in the form of postcards and prints. During Margaret Stones' visit in 1975, artwork held by the herbarium became part of a limited edition of postcards and folio-sized prints⁹⁷ and later in 1975 the Trust Committee agreed to print a selection of Stones' and Conabere's work to be sold at the Botanic Gardens kiosk.⁹⁸ These proved a good source of funds and in 1979 a new set of paintings was selected for future sales.⁹⁹ In 1986, since it was considered there were few remaining botanical drawings in the herbarium's collection decorative enough to reproduce as large prints, the Trust Committee decided to commission Podwyszynski to produce four more paintings suitable for reproduction and sale.¹⁰⁰

Bibliography of Artwork

Another indication of the trust's interest in botanical illustration was its decision in 1977 to provide a sum of \$2,000 toward a bibliography of art work relating to Australian native flora held in Australia and the herbaria of England and Europe.¹⁰¹ Contact was made with an Australian science graduate, Mrs Julie Marginson, on leave in England and with ready access to the British Museum library. Marginson subsequently undertook three months research, under the supervision of Professor Chambers who was also in England during 1977.¹⁰² On his return Chambers submitted a draft report of Marginson's work, carried out in England and Europe, and entitled, 'Illustrators of Australian vascular plants'.¹⁰³ However the finalisation of this report proved more time consuming than anticipated, and is still in progress.

⁹⁷ *Research Committee Minutes*, 15 August 1974.

⁹⁸ *Trust Committee Minutes*, 23 October 1975.

⁹⁹ *Trust Committee Minutes*, 24 May 1979.

¹⁰⁰ *Trust Committee Minutes*, 30 October 1986.

These paintings do not appear to be held by the Royal Botanic Gardens library and may be still in the possession of the artist.

¹⁰¹ *Research Committee Minutes*, 24 February 1977

¹⁰² *Research Committee Minutes*, 26 May 1977

¹⁰³ *Research Committee Minutes*, 23 February 1978

POLITICAL ROLE

Independent Body

Prior to the formation of the trust there was no independent body that could lobby the Government on behalf of the Botanic Gardens. Certainly the director could make recommendations, but the gardens was just one section of a Government department and his comments had to be directed initially through the appropriate minister. The establishment of the trust introduced a new and influential player into the political process.

Sidney Myer Music Bowl

The Trust Committee made representations to the Government on a broad range of subjects. In 1949, when it was proposed to build an entertainment bowl (later the Sidney Myer Music Bowl) in the Botanic Gardens, the Trust Committee wrote a letter objecting in the strongest terms to its construction in the gardens¹⁰⁴ and was successful. By contrast, during the 1970s, when it was planned to locate a restaurant in the Botanic Gardens, the Trust Committee supported the proposal but was defeated.

Selection of Director

The Trust Committee recognised that the position of director was of vital importance to the proper management and progress of the gardens, and felt uniquely qualified to advise the Victorian Government when a new appointment was under consideration. In both 1956 and 1970, after Jessep and then Pescott retired, the Trust Committee corresponded with the Government regarding selection criteria for the next director. In 1956 the Trust Committee's strong interest in promoting scientific research was evident in their recommendation:

In most Botanic Gardens of this standard it has been customary...to make the Director a scientist with horticultural leanings, rather than a horticulturist with a limited

¹⁰⁴ Trust Committee Minutes , 8 June 1949.

*knowledge of science. We believe Melbourne is now a city of such size and its Garden of such importance that this principle could well be applied when the appointment is considered.*¹⁰⁵

Bland Inquiry

The Trust Committee was also skilled at representing the interests of the Botanic Gardens to committees and inquiries. During the Bland Inquiry into the Australian Public Service conducted in 1973, the Trust Committee successfully opposed any move to separate the Botanic Gardens and the herbarium, and stressed their interdependence.¹⁰⁶ However their later opposition to the Bland Report's recommendation that the Botanic Gardens be transferred to the Department of Conservation, did not meet with the same success.

Board of Management

The trust was given another opportunity to express their views on government control of the Botanic Gardens in 1991 when a Bill was introduced into the Victorian Parliament which stipulated that the gardens would no longer operate under the direct control of a government department but would instead be administered by a board of management. The Trust Committee contributed to the discussion surrounding this Bill, suggesting a number of amendments which were incorporated into the final version.¹⁰⁷ However the successful passage of the Bill inevitably led to discussions regarding the respective roles of the trust and the new board. This was simplified somewhat by the fact that the deputy chairman of the board, Marian Brookes, was also a research committee member. Eventually a committee comprised of members from both the trust and the Botanic Gardens Board was established in March 1993 to facilitate co-operation between the two bodies.¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁵ University of Melbourne Archives, Turner LS 7/24-29/- Box 25B, J. S. Turner to Secretary for Lands, 1956.

¹⁰⁶ *Trust Committee Minutes*, 17 October 1974.

¹⁰⁷ *Trust Committee Minutes*, 28 November 1991.

¹⁰⁸ *Trust Committee Minutes*, 25 February 1993.

'Priming'

The other way in which the trust operated in the political arena was through 'priming' what it believed to be worthwhile initiatives and then asking the Government to continue financing the projects once their value had been proven. For instance in 1964 Pescott outlined the urgent need for additional staff in his official report to the Government. The Trust Committee supported him strongly, stating that the trust viewed the staff shortage so seriously that, if the Government refused to act, they would provide funding to allow the herbarium to fill a needed staff position for a six month period. The trust subsequently funded the employment of Rex Filson, a specialist in the science of lichens, to begin to put the herbarium's lichen collection in order.¹⁰⁹ At the expiration of the six month period an appeal was made to the Government to continue his employment. Since a refusal would have been a denial of the obvious value of Filson's work, the Government responded by appointing Filson as a permanent staff member.¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁹ *Annual Report*, 1963-4.

¹¹⁰ *Annual Report*, 1964-5.

A RANGE OF PROJECTS

Works in the Botanic Gardens

The trust funded an enormous range of projects. Many related specifically to works in the Botanic Gardens. During the 1948 vacation period the trust paid for several university students to undertake a plant survey of the Botanic Gardens using a grid plan. When completed it gave gardening staff, for the first time, an accurate record of various plants and their position in the gardens.¹¹¹

A more tangible addition to the gardens was commissioned by the Trust Committee in 1963 when they funded an experimental fountain, designed by Garnet Alsop, a local architect, and constructed in the Nymphaea Lake.¹¹² This followed recommendations from Pescott on his return from an overseas trip. It was the first time a fountain had been built in the gardens that was not connected to statuary, but instead consisted of multiple jets of water rising straight from the surface of water. It met with great public approval although the Trust Committee tactfully admitted that the intention of simulating an open hibiscus flower 'had not been completely realised'.¹¹³

Californian Garden

Other additions followed. In 1966 Ellis Stones, a specialist in rock garden work, was employed by the trust to design and construct a rock garden, thereby providing a feature that many felt had long been missing from the gardens.¹¹⁴ Much later, in 1991, the trust provided the impetus for the construction of a Californian garden in the gardens after contributing \$4,000 to allow two members of the gardens staff, Stephen Forbes and

¹¹¹ Professor Turner to Secretary of Lands, 3 February 1953.

¹¹² *Annual Report*, 1963–4.

¹¹³ *Annual Report*, 1964–5.

¹¹⁴ *Annual Report*, 1966–70.

Warren Penna, to travel to the United States and Mexico on a collecting trip.¹¹⁵ On their return, Trust Committee member John Taylor proposed that use be made of their experience by redeveloping the Anderson Street border of the gardens as a Californian garden.¹¹⁶ Financing the new development presented difficulties until Judy Baillieu spoke to a previous Trust Committee member, Dame Elisabeth Murdoch, who had served on the trust for twenty-eight years and had in fact been the first woman appointed to the committee.¹¹⁷ She was instantly enthusiastic and generously offered to fund the cost of the new Californian garden, providing an initial donation of \$25,000.¹¹⁸



The opening of the new Californian Garden, Royal Botanic Gardens, Melbourne c. 1994. (From left to right): Mrs Janet Calvert-Jones, Mr Bill Irvine, Dame Elisabeth Murdoch, Sir Rupert Hamer, Dr Phillip Moors. Funding support from the trust toward collecting trips in the United States provided the impetus for the construction of a Californian Garden. The development of the Californian Garden was generously financed by Dame Elisabeth Murdoch. (*Royal Botanic Gardens, Library*)

Conferences

Before the formation of the trust, staff at the Botanic Gardens and National Herbarium had for many years felt themselves isolated from botanical developments in other parts of the world and even from those in other Australian States. The Trust Committee had taken one step toward alleviating this sense of isolation when they invited Dr Melville to Australia in 1952 and thereby established much stronger links with the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew.

However the Trust Committee recognised that it was essential that staff continue to be exposed to international developments, and for this reason the trust provided financial assistance for Pescott to travel overseas for six months in 1962, during which time he attended a number of international horticultural conferences and visited gardens in Europe and England.¹¹⁹ This trip had a profound effect on the director, and the lengthy report and recommendations he wrote on his return became the basis for many of his policy decisions in the ensuing years.

Over the next thirty years the trust periodically gave subsidies which assisted staff members to travel overseas. These included Pescott's attendance at the fifth International Conference on Parks and Gardens in Berne in 1969,¹²⁰ the participation of Rex Filson at the International Association for Lichenology in 1978¹²¹ and the attendance of staff member Stephen Forbes at a conference in Rio de Janeiro in 1992.¹²² In the late 1980s the trust also allowed Forbes \$10,000 a year to study for his Masters degree in Bath, England.¹²³

Field Work

The trust made a significant contribution toward botanical research and the expansion of collections of the National Herbarium through the provision of funds for field work. The staff of the National Herbarium began an intensive programme of field work throughout Victoria in the spring of 1958, and the trust assisted by providing a field vehicle for botanists and other

¹¹⁵ *Trust Committee Minutes*, 30 May 1991.

¹¹⁶ *Trust Committee Minutes*, 29 August 1991.

¹¹⁷ This was in 1961.

¹¹⁸ *Trust Committee Minutes*, 28 November 1991. The total cost of the new Californian garden is believed to have been around \$58,000.

¹¹⁹ *Trust Committee Minutes*, 19 December 1960.

¹²⁰ *Trust Committee Minutes*, 3 December 1969.

¹²¹ *Trust Committee Minutes*, 23 November 1978.

¹²² *Trust Committee Minutes*, 28 May 1992.

¹²³ Information from members of Trust Committee, February 1996.

smaller equipment for collecting purposes.¹²⁴ Following this excursion the trust gave financial assistance to a botanical collecting trip to Western Australia by three staff members in the spring of 1966.¹²⁵

A lull occurred in the 1970s, but the 1980s found the trust funding a whole array of collecting excursions where these would benefit the National Herbarium or Botanic Gardens, including the hire of a helicopter for a botanists' party collecting in the Central Kimberley Province, Western Australia,¹²⁶ a subsidy to allow an expert on rhododendrons, Dr Argent, to collect seed and growing material,¹²⁷ support for collecting parties travelling to Papua New Guinea and to New Caledonia¹²⁸ and financial assistance for two trips to the Kimberleys in Western Australia by Dr George Scott, to locate material of a new bryophyte.¹²⁹ Between 1989 and 1991, trust funding also facilitated staff participation in collecting excursions to places as far flung as North Vietnam, Mexico, the United States, Western Australia, Tasmania and Kangaroo Island in South Australia.¹³⁰ In 1992 trust funding allowed Dr Tim Entwisle to travel to France for two months to examine macoralgae specimens.¹³¹



Alistair Watt collecting a rare conifer (*Callitras sulcata*) on the North Dumbea River, on the west coast of the main island of New Caledonia.

Trust funding enabled Alistair Watt to conduct plant collecting expeditions in New Caledonia in 1987 and 1994. Indeed the initial funding acted as a seeding grant, leading to the development of an extensive and continuing botanical liaison between Australia and the New Caledonia area. (Alistair Watt)

¹²⁴ Annual Report, 1957–8

¹²⁵ Research Committee Minutes, 25 November 1966.

¹²⁶ Research Committee Minutes, 4 June 1981.

¹²⁷ Research Committee Minutes, 29 March 1984.

¹²⁸ Trust Committee Minutes, 30 October 1986.

¹²⁹ Trust Committee Minutes, 8 September 1988.

¹³⁰ Trust Committee Minutes, 1989–91.

¹³¹ Trust Committee Minutes, 28 November 1991.

Alistair Watt provides a clear example of the benefits of such grants. During 1987 and 1994 trust funding enabled Watt to conduct plant collecting expeditions in New Caledonia. Not only did these trips present the Botanic Gardens with an extensive range of plants species, but they gave Watt the opportunity to develop botanical liaison with authorities on the island, prompting an invitation to prepare an action plan for conifer conservation on New Caledonia. In addition, it enabled him to develop a detailed knowledge of many rare and endangered species to be passed onto people working on the islands.¹³²

The Trust Committee expanded the collections held at the National Herbarium in other ways. During 1957 they jointly provided funds with the Government for the purchase of Raleigh Black's herbarium consisting of over ten thousand specimens, including particularly valuable specimens from Tasmania where Black had been acting Government Botanist.¹³³ In 1975 the trust managed to purchase for the Botanic Gardens an important bulb collection from the estate of Mr A. J. Brandrup.¹³⁴

Plant Distribution Survey

The formation of the Research Branch in 1965 led to a decision to conduct a plant distribution survey of Victoria. This ambitious project was directed by Dr David Churchill, who had experience of similar work in Britain.¹³⁵ Churchill used a computer – a rare commodity at this time – to prepare lists of flora, relying mainly on existing published records.¹³⁶ He also produced a series of area maps based on a master map to be used in later field work.¹³⁷

By 1970 he was able to submit to the Research Committee computer sheets detailing the distribution of known species in a grid system, and it was agreed to print two thousand copies of these distribution cards along with a check list of Victorian plants to facilitate further field and survey work.¹³⁸

It was initially hoped that a large portion of the survey work could be conducted on a voluntary basis and a conference was

¹³² Pers. communication, 3 June 1996

¹³³ Annual Report, 1957–8.

¹³⁴ Trust Committee Minutes, 24 April 1975.

¹³⁵ Research Committee Minutes, 5 November 1965.

¹³⁶ Research Committee Minutes, 14 April 1969.

¹³⁷ Research Committee Minutes, 14 April 1969.

¹³⁸ Research Committee Minutes, 3 August 1970.

planned in the winter of 1967 to explain the project to amateur botanists from across the State.¹³⁹ The Trust Committee was particularly inspired by the work of Cliff Beaglehole who had for many years been conducting a detailed survey of the flora of the Grampians. Viewing his work as an excellent pilot study, the Research Committee provided Beaglehole with funding totalling \$10,000 between 1968 and 1969.¹⁴⁰

Beaglehole's survey resulted in voluminous reports and the documentation of a startling range of flora, but unfortunately the method of recording he used could not easily be amalgamated with Churchill's computerised material. In 1977 the Research Committee finally allocated a further \$6,000 to allow Beaglehole to enter his material into the Victorian flora survey map grids.¹⁴¹

Churchill continued his work but the difficulties of relying on voluntary labour for identification and survey quickly became apparent, and eventually led to the establishment of a Flora Survey Unit at the Botanic Gardens. This was transferred in the mid-1980s to the Department of Conservation and Environment, where it still exists in a modified form, undertaking special botanical surveys mainly in relation to logging.¹⁴²

¹³⁹ *Research Committee Minutes*, 28 March 1966.

¹⁴⁰ *Research Committee Minutes*, 17 November 1969.

¹⁴¹ *Research Committee Minutes*, 18 August 1977.

¹⁴² Information from Dr Philip Moors, March 1996.

PLANT BREEDING

Culture and Improvement of Native Flora

At an early meeting of the Trust Committee, when members were asked to nominate appropriate uses for trust funds, Russell Grimwade argued for the appointment of a professional plant breeder who would work on the culture and improvement of native flora.¹⁴³ Later, in a four-page letter amplifying his proposal he stated:

*Although this country is naturally endowed with a wide range of flowering shrubs of great intrinsic horticultural value, their culture has been notably untouched...my proposal would have the avowed aim of establishing Australian wild flowers as additions to the ordinary stock of the private and public gardens of the temperate zones.*¹⁴⁴

Observatory Trial Grounds

Three years later in 1948 the Trust Committee was granted an acre of land in the Observatory grounds adjoining the Botanic Gardens so that a plant breeding programme could commence.¹⁴⁵ While the ground was being cleared, ploughed and levelled for planting the trust obtained the services of Mr Schubert, a nurseryman in East Oakleigh, to begin the propagation of native flora at his nursery.¹⁴⁶ The trust also employed Mr J. S. Seaton, an enthusiast in native flora, as an official correspondent so that contact could be made with amateur gardeners who were cultivating native flora and might be willing to pass on seeds and other plant material to the trust.¹⁴⁷

Unfortunately this part of the project was not a success since contributions of native plant material from gardeners did not

¹⁴³ *Trust Committee Minutes*, 18 July 1945.

¹⁴⁴ *Trust Committee Minutes*, 27 July 1945.

¹⁴⁵ *Trust Committee Minutes*, 5 May 1948.

¹⁴⁶ *Trust Committee Minutes*, 4 May 1949.

¹⁴⁷ *Trust Committee Minutes*, 8 December 1948.

reach anywhere near the number anticipated.¹⁴⁸ Those plants that were obtained were eventually transferred to the Observatory grounds, and when other native plants from the Botanic Gardens potting sheds were added to the collection, they formed the nucleus of a small experimental native garden with the stated aim of introducing handsome new native plants into cultivation, both in the Botanic Gardens and in Melbourne gardens generally.¹⁴⁹

Plant Breeder

The new plantation came under the general supervision of the director, Alexander Jessep,¹⁵⁰ but it suffered from the start from the want of a full-time gardener to care for it. During 1948 the Trust Committee had begun a search for a systematically trained person, experienced in the sciences of genetics and the arts of gardening, who could be employed as a plant breeder. Contact was made with a Mr E. G. Hooper from Devonshire, England, who appeared a perfect candidate for the position, but due to long delays and the Australian Government's refusal to grant a priority early passage, Hooper withdrew his initial acceptance.¹⁵¹

The trust continued their search for a local person with the appropriate qualifications but in the meantime the new plantation was neglected and the plant breeding project faced collapse. Finally in 1951 Jessep arranged for a permanent officer of the Botanic Gardens staff to be released from his ordinary duties to put the area into working order.¹⁵² By 1952 the area was beginning to fulfil its function as a research and experimental facility with twenty-two plots, comprising seven hundred plants, under cultivation. Preliminary research was conducted on a number of problems including soil preferences, disease and insect pests in addition to the improvement of the plant for its aesthetic value.¹⁵³ Even so, it became increasingly clear that the Observatory grounds had severe limitations and was not a satisfactory site for long-term research, not least because the soil was ill-adapted for the growth of natives.¹⁵⁴ The eventual abandonment of the plant

¹⁴⁸ *Trust Committee Minutes*, 27 March 1950.

¹⁴⁹ Memo by Professor Turner on policy, 29 September 1950.

¹⁵⁰ *Annual Report*, 1952.

¹⁵¹ *Trust Committee Minutes*, 13 April 1949.

¹⁵² Report to Trust Committee by Mr Jessep, 22 April 1952.

¹⁵³ Report to Trust Committee by Mr Jessep, 22 April 1952.

¹⁵⁴ *Trust Committee Minutes*, 10 January 1951.

breeding project later became another strong argument for the establishment of a native plant annexe outside Melbourne.

Native Plants Preservation Society

The strong interest in native flora revealed in the Trust Committee's support of the plant breeding project also found expression in other ways. During the 1950s the Trust Committee made an annual donation of £100 to the Native Plants Preservation Society, which played an influential role in persuading shire councils to fence areas in which wildflowers were prevalent. In 1957 the trust also helped fund a Natural Resources Exhibition at the Melbourne Town Hall on Australian native plants suitable for growing in the home garden, and during the early 1960s, provided financial assistance to the Natural Resources Conservation League.¹⁵⁵

Scaevola

An important postscript to the Trust Committee's early disappointment in the area of plant breeding is the current 'plant breeding' work being conducted on the native plant *Scaevola*.

In 1989, following a detailed proposal presented by Professor Bruce Knox, the Trust Committee agreed to support the University of Melbourne School of Botany and allocated \$20,000 a year for the next three years to fund a postgraduate student to work on the domestication of *Scaevola*. This became known as the Maud Gibson Scholarship and by 1992, the holder of the scholarship, Greg Howell, had brought into cultivation a germplasm collection of the *Scaevola* species. The market potential of *Scaevola* stock was considered high, particularly as an export commodity, and it attracted strong interest from commercial enterprises.¹⁵⁶

In 1994 the *Scaevola* project moved onto its second stage. Howell completed his scholarship but the trust successfully applied for the Maud Gibson Scholarship to continue as a new three-year industry-based scholarship. This was given to postgraduate student Lyn Kennedy. At the same time a grant was awarded, on the condition of part funding by the trust, for the continuing propagation and development of *Scaevola* stock for

¹⁵⁵ *Annual Report*, 1960-1.

¹⁵⁶ *Annual Report*, 1992.

export, particularly relating to the use of embryo rescue technology. This was taken up by Professor Knox and Dr Bhalla at the University of Melbourne.¹⁵⁷



Greg Howell collects a rare and endangered species, *Scaevola oldfieldii*, on the Murchison River, near Kalbarri National Park, Western Australia, 1991.

The Maud Gibson Scholarship was created in 1990 in co-operation with the School of Botany, University of Melbourne. The first holder of the scholarship, Greg Howell, was able to bring into cultivation an important germplasm collection of the *Scaevola* species. (School of Botany, University of Melbourne)

¹⁵⁷ Annual Report, 1993.

ROYAL BOTANIC GARDENS, CRANBOURNE

Native Plant Annexe

As early as July 1945 Professor John Turner had recommended to the Trust Committee the acquisition of land in the country 'where plants could be grown and seen to better advantage under natural conditions'.¹⁵⁸ His suggestion reflected the growing public interest in native plants and also the recognition that, owing to unsuitable soil, heavy shade and lack of space, the development of an extensive native garden in the present Botanic Gardens was not practical.

The failure of the plant breeding programme stimulated further discussion and led to a firm commitment by the Trust Committee to work toward the establishment of a native plant annexe to the Botanic Gardens. Expert opinion stated that the best location for such an annexe would be in typical heathland country characterised by deep sandy soils, such as existed around the Mornington Peninsula. It was also considered important that the site should be in reasonable proximity to Melbourne, both for the convenience of visitors and to facilitate a constant interchange of staff and resources between the present Botanic Gardens and the new annexe.

Searching

The first lead came in 1951 when Sir Russell Grimwade brought to the Trust Committee's attention 280 acres of land near Frankston owned by the Frankston Golf Club.¹⁵⁹ Although the site appeared ideal, the Committee was reluctantly compelled to reject it since the land was only available at the full

¹⁵⁸ Trust Committee Minutes, 18 July 1945.

¹⁵⁹ Trust Committee Minutes, 10 January 1951.

market value.¹⁶⁰ Nevertheless, it generated substantial interest amongst the Trust Committee and led to the appointment of a sub-committee, consisting of Alexander Jessep and Professor Turner, to continue investigating other areas.¹⁶¹

Over the next decade this sub-committee inspected a large number of prospective sites within an eighty-kilometre radius of Melbourne, including sites at Sandy Point, the Brisbane Ranges and the Langwarrin Military Reserve. Although initially promising, each of these was eventually abandoned due to cost, unsuitable environmental qualities or lack of availability. By the end of the decade the search was becoming increasingly urgent as post-war building development enveloped more and more of the surviving heathland.

Cranbourne

Finally, in 1961, a Trust Committee member, Professor Sir Samuel Wadham, was contacted by a friend from Cranbourne, Alan Ritchie. Ritchie recommended a Commonwealth military reserve of 349 acres (later increased to 429 acres or 174 hectares) of almost virgin heathland located in the black sandy loam belt around Cranbourne.¹⁶² It featured tea-tree, heath, wattles and ground orchids, and was only fifty-five kilometres south-east of Melbourne. After visiting the site, the Trust Committee realised it would be perfect for their purposes and trust member the Hon. Peter Howson (MHR) was appointed to initiate negotiations between the Commonwealth and Victorian governments to obtain a basis for acquisition of the land.¹⁶³

Howson had been appointed to the Trust Committee in 1961, to continue the liaison between the committee and the trustee company which Frederick Grassick (now retiring) had managed so successfully for sixteen years. Howson not only had Grassick's recommendation, but as the nephew of Miss Maud Gibson, he was seen as a particularly appropriate choice. By a happy coincidence, Miss Maud Gibson happened to be visiting Victoria just as the Cranbourne land became available and Howson had the opportunity to show her the proposed site. He remembers:

¹⁶⁰ *Trust Committee Minutes*, 2 May 1951.

¹⁶¹ *Trust Committee Minutes*, 7 March 1951.

¹⁶² *Trust Committee Minutes*, 9 October 1961 and *Annual Report 1966–70*.

¹⁶³ *Trust Committee Minutes*, 9 October 1961.

*We got there and walked up to the trig point on a very hot day with lots of snakes. We saw the site and it was obvious, as you look out from the trig point...it had all the attributes of a site we wanted. Partly because there was so much heathland perfectly unspoilt, and secondly because there was a sand mine, part of which has been denuded of sand, but part of which was still left, and therefore there was an open bit of land which would be ideal for growing natives. She was delighted.*¹⁶⁴

Delays

Howson had a number of conversations with the Commonwealth Minister for the Interior regarding the Cranbourne land and initially the purchase of the site proceeded smoothly.¹⁶⁵ In March 1963, a price of £7,500 – half the land's commercial value – was agreed by the Department of the Interior and the Victorian Department of Crown Lands and Survey, and it appeared that all that was needed was State Cabinet and Treasury approval.¹⁶⁶

Just three months later, however, the Department of the Interior withdrew the offer.¹⁶⁷ Military training operations were being extended at the nearby Langwarrin Military Reserve and it was thought that the Cranbourne reserve might also be required for military exercises.¹⁶⁸ Howson entered into discussions with the Department of the Interior and he was assured that the land would eventually become available, although a number of issues, in particular Australia's involvement in the Vietnam War, made it impossible to give a definite date.¹⁶⁹

Consequently the whole process stalled until November 1968, when the Department of the Interior again notified the State that they were prepared to sell the Cranbourne reserve. Since commercial valuation of the land now stood at \$56,000, the purchase price would be \$28,000. The Trust Committee was so convinced of the value of the land that it agreed to contribute the difference between the past valuation of \$15,000 and the present

¹⁶⁴ Interview with Peter Howson by Eve Almond, 1 September 1994.

¹⁶⁵ *Trust Committee Minutes*, 9 October 1961 and 11 March 1963.

¹⁶⁶ *Trust Committee Minutes*, 11 March 1963.

¹⁶⁷ *Trust Committee Minutes*, 16 July 1963.

¹⁶⁸ *Cranbourne Botanic Gardens: Resource Inventory and Discussion Paper*, Paul Dartnell and Paul Goodison, 1994, p. 7.

¹⁶⁹ *Trust Committee Minutes*, 25 June 1964.

valuation on the understanding that the Government provided the remainder.¹⁷⁰

Purchase

The Premier of Victoria, Henry Bolte, was initially cautious about approving this expenditure, and the Director of the Botanic Gardens was asked to provide a detailed statement for use of the Cranbourne land if it was acquired, with an estimate of staff requirements and running costs.¹⁷¹ The Premier was also swayed by conversations with Dame Elisabeth Murdoch, a member of the Trust Committee and a strong supporter of the Cranbourne Botanic Gardens.¹⁷² As a result, in November 1969 the required funds were made available, with the trust ultimately contributing \$5,000.¹⁷³

By June 1970 the transfer of the Cranbourne reserve was complete and on 28 October 1970 a notice appeared in the Victorian Government Gazette permanently reserving the land at Cranbourne for the 'purposes of a Botanic Garden and Research Institute devoted to the growing, display and study of Australian native plants, and the enjoyment of the people of Victoria'.¹⁷⁴ The Trust Committee's efforts over twenty years had finally borne fruit.

Expansion

The Cranbourne Botanic Garden now comprised 174 hectares (429 acres).¹⁷⁵ However in 1974 the trust commissioned a report from Professor G. Seddon. In a letter based on this report Howson drew the Government's attention to the fact that the Cranbourne Garden was much smaller than gardens of similar nature in other parts of the world. For instance, the size of Kings Park in Perth was 407 hectares (1,007 acres) while Hyde Park-

¹⁷⁰ *Trust Committee Minutes*, 14 April 1969.

¹⁷¹ *Trust Committee Minutes*, 17 November 1969.

¹⁷² Interview with Peter Howson by Eve Almond, 1 September 1994.

¹⁷³ *Cranbourne Botanic Gardens: Resource Inventory and Discussion Paper*, Paul Dartnell and Paul Goodison, 1994, p. 7.

¹⁷⁴ *Victorian Government Gazette*, no. 99, 28 October 1970, p. 3474 (quoted in report by R. Pescott, 31 March 1971, Cranbourne Native Plants Annexe Developmental Programme, University of Melbourne Archives, Professor Carrick Chambers papers, Box No BS/1/4/5, File TCC 3-1-7).

¹⁷⁵ University of Melbourne Archives, Professor Carrick Chambers papers, unnumbered box, file TCC-3, Cranbourne Annexe Development Committee Minutes, 17 February 1981, 'Review of Progress'.

Kensington Gardens, England totalled 489 hectares (1,208 acres) and Kew Gardens, England covered 1,071 hectares (2,646 acres).¹⁷⁶ In the light of this information the Trust Committee resolved that it was vitally important that the Cranbourne Gardens be extended to a size of about 405 hectares (1,000 acres). There was little time to lose, as Howson explained to the Minister for Conservation, Lands and Soldier Settlement, Mr W. A. Borthwick, in 1977:

*Land to extend the Annexe...is presently available in that it is as yet undeveloped although development is rapidly encroaching toward the area as Cranbourne itself extends. The opportunity should be taken to buy the land now.*¹⁷⁷

Esso Land

The Trust Committee's efforts initially focused on twenty-two hectares of land on the south-western boundary of the Cranbourne Botanic Gardens¹⁷⁸ which had been mined extensively for sand and therefore presented a serious erosion risk. The trust acquired this land from Esso in 1976 after being assisted in their negotiations by the Governor of Victoria, Sir Rohan Delacombe, who had recently visited the gardens and recognised their potential.¹⁷⁹

Maintop Land

The next area of interest was sixty-eight hectares which formed part of the larger farming property of Maintop, owned by Alan Ritchie and adjoining the Cranbourne Botanic Gardens on the west. This area was seen as highly desirable because it possessed a large stand of original open eucalypt forest growing in clay loam soils – in contrast to the existing gardens, which consisted almost entirely of heathland in sandy soils. The acquisition of the land would not only preserve two different plant communities which had once been typical of the Mornington Peninsula, but would also protect fauna such as the grey kangaroos which

¹⁷⁶ University of Melbourne Archives, Professor Carrick Chambers papers, unnumbered box, file TCC-3, letter from Peter Howson to Hon. W. A. Borthwick, Minister for Conservation, Lands and Soldier Settlement, 1977.

¹⁷⁷ University of Melbourne Archives, Professor Carrick Chambers papers, unnumbered box, file TCC-3, Letter from Peter Howson to Hon. W. A. Borthwick, Minister for Conservation, Lands and Soldier Settlement, 1977.

¹⁷⁸ *Trust Committee Minutes*, 27 May 1976.

¹⁷⁹ *Trust Committee Minutes*, 27 May 1976.

depended on both types of vegetation for survival, feeding on the heath land but sheltering in the open woodland.¹⁸⁰

As early as 1974 Ritchie had indicated his willingness to sell a portion of Maintop to the Cranbourne Botanic Gardens.¹⁸¹ Over the next few years the Trust Committee campaigned continually for the Government's acquisition of Maintop.¹⁸² No satisfactory government response was received and eventually in 1979, following a report by a Joint Planning Advisory Committee which strongly recommended the purchase of Maintop,¹⁸³ the Trust Committee resolved to lend the State Government funds toward the purchase of Maintop at a reduced rate of interest for ten years. By pooling the resources of both the Trust Committee and Research Committee, \$120,000 was raised toward the purchase price of \$160,000.¹⁸⁴ The shortfall was made up by four individual members of the Trust Committee (Howson, Murdoch, Law-Smith and Wilson) who volunteered to make available loans of \$10,000 each.¹⁸⁵ As a result the Maintop land was added to the Cranbourne Botanic Gardens, bringing the total area to six times the size of the Royal Botanic Gardens in the Domain.¹⁸⁶

At the same time as they were campaigning to purchase the Maintop land, the Trust Committee also made a strong case for the closure of Smith's Lane, which separated Maintop from the existing Cranbourne Gardens and which animals had to cross in their daily search for food. In March 1984 this goal was achieved and Smith's Lane was closed.¹⁸⁷

¹⁸⁰ *Cranbourne: Botanic Gardens Annexe and its Environs, A Report by the Joint Planning Advisory Committee to the Ministry for Planning*, 1975, p. 18.

¹⁸¹ *Trust Committee Minutes*, 7 February 1974.

¹⁸² *Research Committee Minutes*, 25 November 1976.

¹⁸³ *Research Committee Minutes*, 23 August 1979.

¹⁸⁴ University of Melbourne Archives, Professor Carrick Chambers papers, Box BS 1/4/5, File TCC-3-1-7, Gibson Trust Diary Note, 8 October 1979 and letter from Professor Carrick Chambers to manager of Union Fidelity, 23 January 1980.

¹⁸⁵ *Trust Committee Minutes*, 6 December 1979.

¹⁸⁶ *Age*, 6 August 1980.

¹⁸⁷ *Research Committee Minutes*, 29 March 1984.



Landscape view of Royal Botanic Gardens, Cranbourne, 1989.

The Trust Committee worked for many years toward the establishment of an extensive native garden in Cranbourne after it became clear that unsuitable soil, heavy shade and lack of space, made such a garden impractical in the present Melbourne Botanic Gardens. (*Royal Botanic Gardens, Library*)

Putt Land

Over the next ten years three further parcels of land were acquired for the Cranbourne Botanic Gardens. In 1981 approximately sixty hectares of agricultural land to the south of the gardens (later known as the Wylies Creek area) was obtained from Mr Putt for the sum of \$201,000. The acquisition of this land was considered important to provide a buffer between the gardens and future developments which might take place along its borders.¹⁸⁸ The purchase followed lengthy negotiations between Putt and Sir Thomas Ramsay, a Research Committee member,¹⁸⁹ and also involved discussion with the Cranbourne Council since Putt wanted approval to subdivide the eastern portion of the land into seventeen allotments for a retirement village, before selling the rest to the Gardens.¹⁹⁰

¹⁸⁸ *Cranbourne Botanic Gardens: Resource Inventory and Discussion Paper*, Paul Dartnell and Paul Goodison, 1994, p. 7.

¹⁸⁹ Interview with Peter Howson by Eve Almond, 1 September 1994.

¹⁹⁰ *Trust Committee Minutes*, 24 September 1980.

The initial deposit of \$25,000 on the land was met by the Research Committee, while the Trust Committee approved the expenditure of a further \$49,000. Four individual members of the Research Committee agreed to contribute \$10,000 each¹⁹¹ and, after an approach on the trust's behalf by the Victorian Conservation Trust, the R. E. Ross Trust donated \$25,000. The remainder of the money was presumably supplied by the Government. Although trust chairman Professor Carrick Chambers wrote to the Premier of Victoria, Mr L. H. S. Thompson, in October 1981 stating that individual members were prepared to supplement the required amount up to \$100,000,¹⁹² there is no record that this in fact became necessary.

Boral Land

The second parcel of land was owned by Boral and covered approximately fifty-two hectares¹⁹³ adjoining the Cranbourne Botanic Gardens to the north. There had always been a tacit agreement between Boral and the trust that when they had finished sand mining in the area they would make part of their land over to the Cranbourne Botanic Gardens. Lady Law-Smith was particularly influential in this regard,¹⁹⁴ and paved the way for meetings between Howson, Chambers and the Boral Board of Management.¹⁹⁵

Unfortunately, in the meantime, part of the Boral land was earmarked for use as a racecourse, so that by the time the land was transferred to the Crown in August 1985 (and then officially to the Cranbourne Gardens in 1988),¹⁹⁶ the Trust Committee had lost some of the land that had been promised.¹⁹⁷ Nevertheless, the great advantage of obtaining a portion of Boral land was that it gave the Cranbourne Botanic Gardens a 'shop window' onto the South Gippsland Highway which could now be designed as the main entrance into the gardens. The previous entrance along Stevenson's Road had certainly not provided the

¹⁹¹ *Research Committee Minutes*, 29 October 1981.

¹⁹² University of Melbourne Archives, Professor Carrick Chambers papers, unnumbered box, file TCC-3, Letter from Professor Carrick Chambers to the Premier of Victoria, Hon. L. H. S. Thompson, 14 October 1981.

¹⁹³ *Research Committee Minutes*, 20 November 1980.

¹⁹⁴ *Trust Committee Minutes*, 24 September 1981.

¹⁹⁵ *Research Committee Minutes*, 20 November 1980.

¹⁹⁶ *Cranbourne Botanic Gardens: Resource Inventory and Discussion Paper*, Paul Dartnell and Paul Goodison, 1994, p. 7.

¹⁹⁷ *Trust Committee Minutes*, 29 August 1985.

best introduction to a native garden, since it compelled visitors to pass first the Cranbourne tip and then a chicken factory!¹⁹⁸ Moreover the South Gippsland Highway was on the major tourist route to Phillip Island and was therefore calculated to bring in many more visitors.

At the same time the Trust Committee continued to campaign, as they had for many years, against any enlargement of Ballarto Road, situated in close proximity to the gardens and proposed as the route for the Southern Cranbourne Bypass and an east-west link road, arguing that this would create an unacceptable source of visual, noise and air pollution.¹⁹⁹

Exner Land

The final piece of land obtained was fourteen hectares on the southern boundary of the Cranbourne Botanic Gardens, following a ridge line which the Trust Committee believed should be preserved. The owners of the land, the Exners, wanted a high price and negotiations continued over a long period, but they finally agreed to sell for \$280,000 in 1991 as the price of land began to fall.²⁰⁰ The full purchase price was made available by the R. E. Ross Trust.²⁰¹

Development

By 1991 the task of creating a world class native garden from what was still, in essence, an undeveloped reserve, was well under way. It had taken twenty years to acquire the first block of land at Cranbourne and another twenty years to bring it to its present size of 352 hectares. This was almost the 405 hectares (1,000 acres) at which the committees had been aiming. Now, although negotiations continued for additional small parcels of land, the trust's focus essentially turned away from expansion toward development.

The trust had already funded some preliminary planning for the Cranbourne Botanic Gardens in the early 1970s, including a land-use plan by Professor Pryor,²⁰² a general landscape assess-

¹⁹⁸ Interview with Peter Howson by Eve Almond, 1 September 1994.

¹⁹⁹ *Annual Report*, 1992-3.

²⁰⁰ *Cranbourne Botanic Gardens: Resource Inventory and Discussion Paper*, Paul Dartnell and Paul Goodison, 1994, p. 7.

²⁰¹ *Trust Committee Minutes*, 31 May 1990.

²⁰² *Trust Committee Minutes*, 3 August 1970.

ment by Professor Seddon,²⁰³ and a vegetation and flora report by Dr Paul Gullan.²⁰⁴ But between 1975 and 1985 there was a lull as the Trust Committee put all its available finance into the acquisition of land. The only exception was the formation of the Cranbourne Annexe Development Committee in 1981, on which the trust was officially represented by Sir John Wilson, although Professor Chambers was also a member.²⁰⁵

Substantial grants for the existing Cranbourne Botanic Gardens had not been expected from the State Government during the 1970s because the Premier had made it clear when purchasing the Cranbourne reserve that no immediate funding would be available for development on the site.²⁰⁶ In a letter to the Premier on 24 October 1969, the trust had also confirmed their commitment to careful planning and consolidation in the short-term rather than active development.²⁰⁷

However development work started in earnest in 1988, when Joan Kirner, the Minister for the Department of Conservation and Lands, announced that the Government had allocated \$1.5 million over the next three years to the Cranbourne Botanic Gardens.²⁰⁸ At the same time Peter Lumley, a Botanic Gardens staff member, presented the Trust Committee with plans for the development of the main native garden zone of the gardens. The committee endorsed the plans in principle and resolved to devote most of its available resources, approximately \$40,000 per annum, to the project over the next five years.²⁰⁹ The sum of \$10,000 was immediately allocated to landscaping work,²¹⁰ while \$16,750 was made available in the following year for investigations into ground water and the possibilities of drilling low-cost bores for water irrigation.²¹¹

²⁰² *Trust Committee Minutes*, 3 August 1970.

²⁰³ *Research Committee Minutes*, 15 August 1974.

²⁰⁴ *Research Committee Minutes*, 15 August 1974 and 17 October 1974.

²⁰⁵ *University of Melbourne Archives, Professor Carrick Chambers papers*, unnumbered box, file TCC-3, Cranbourne Annexe Development Committee Minutes, 17 February 1981.

²⁰⁶ Information from Peter Howson, February 1996.

²⁰⁷ *University of Melbourne Archives, Professor Carrick Chambers papers*, Box No BS/1/4/5, File TCC 3-1-7, report by R. Pescott, Cranbourne Native Plants Annexe Developmental Programme, 31 March 1971.

²⁰⁸ *Trust Committee Minutes*, 8 September 1988.

²⁰⁹ *Trust Committee Minutes*, 26 May 1988.

²¹⁰ *Trust Committee Minutes*, 8 September 1988.

²¹¹ *Trust Committee Minutes*, 25 May 1989 and 27 August 1992.

Planning

The attention the Trust Committee has paid to future planning from the early establishment of the Cranbourne Botanic Gardens, has continued. In 1991 it contributed money toward the preparation of a management plan²¹² which the Board of Management of the Botanic Gardens then agreed to match.²¹³ This led in 1993 to work on a site master plan intended to guide the development of the Cranbourne Botanic Gardens for the next thirty years as a world-class botanic garden of exclusively Australian plants. This was partly funded by the trust and two Trust Committee members, Peter Howson and Judy Baillieu, were represented on the Master Plan Steering Committee.²¹⁴

Education

The trust has also continued to fund a wide range of projects at the Cranbourne Botanic Gardens. As early as 1987, in line with its long held view that the educative value of a native plant garden is one of its most important functions, the trust paid for an interpretative and educative display on the reproductive biology of Australian plants for the gardens.²¹⁵ In 1991 it funded the preparation of three education kits to be used in senior high schools,²¹⁶ and during 1994 it provided financial assistance toward the production of a full-colour brochure interpreting the bushland conservation area at the gardens.²¹⁷ Trust Committee member Judy Baillieu was instrumental in forming a Friends of the Cranbourne Botanic Gardens in 1991, for which the Trust Committee provided support in the form of a seeding grant.²¹⁸ A string of lakes recently constructed in the gardens also owe a great deal to Baillieu's influence.

One of the most dramatic works in the Cranbourne Botanic Gardens has been the construction of a Trig Point Lookout in 1993. This was funded through Melbourne Water's Parks and Waterways Program, with assistance from the trust, and provides panoramic views over the gardens landscape and the vistas beyond – to Western Port, Port Phillip Bay, the Dandenongs, the

²¹² *Trust Committee Minutes*, 30 August 1990.

²¹³ *Trust Committee Minutes*, 28 February 1991.

²¹⁴ *Annual Report*, 1993-4.

²¹⁵ *Trust Committee Minutes*, 27 August 1987.

²¹⁶ *Trust Committee Minutes*, 30 May 1991.

²¹⁷ *Annual Report*, 1994-5.

²¹⁸ *Trust Committee Minutes*, 29 August 1991.

Baw Baw Plateau and the skyscrapers of Melbourne.²¹⁹ Visitors who climb the lookout may also notice the building development which in many cases has crept close to the borders of the gardens. Perhaps it is this view which offers the most telling testimony of the trusts achievement – proof that this place at least has been preserved against such encroachments and will continue to offer a haven to those seeking a reprieve from the urban landscape.



The Trig Point Lookout, tied in a red ribbon for its opening, 1993. The Trig Point Lookout was funded through Melbourne Water's Parks and Waterways Program with assistance from the Maud Gibson Trust, and provides panoramic views over the gardens landscape and the vistas beyond as far as Port Phillip Bay and the Dandenongs. (*Royal Botanic Gardens, Library*)

²¹⁹ *Annual Report, 1992–3.*

CONCLUSION

Over the fifty years of its operation the Maud Gibson Trust has funded an enormous variety of projects and activities: some small and quickly completed, others larger in scale and only achieved after many years of effort. This is not to deny that there have been some mistakes and failures. While most of the trust's projects enjoyed obvious success, inevitably a few have also languished and not produced the results anticipated. Nevertheless this has not deterred the trust from continuing to consider new proposals and give its whole hearted support to initiatives it believes to be of value.

As an independent body the trust has played an important role in lobbying the Government on behalf of the Botanic Gardens. It has given financial support to many publications including the standard work on Victorian botany for many years, *Plants in Victoria* by Jim Willis. It has provided opportunities for botanical artists of the calibre of Margaret Stones, Celia Rosser, Betty Conabere, Coralie Whitby, and Anita Podwyszynski. At a time when Victoria felt itself isolated from overseas developments, the trust enabled Dr Melville from the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, England to work at the National Herbarium for twelve months, and in later years provided funding to allow staff members to travel overseas to attend conferences, conduct collecting expeditions and undertake further study.

In the Botanic Gardens the impetus for such developments as the rock garden, the Californian garden and the fountain in the Nymphaea Lake came from the trust, which also funded collecting trips and purchased private collections in order to build up the holdings at the National Herbarium. During the late 1960s the Research Committee initiated a survey of the distribution of plants throughout Victoria which eventually led to the formation of a Flora Survey Unit at the Botanic Gardens.

Problems were experienced with the trust's first efforts to create a plant breeding project, but present attempts to domesticate the native plant *Scaevola* under the auspices of a Maud Gibson Scholarship, promise great success. The trust's great achievement, the establishment and later expansion and development of a Botanic Gardens at Cranbourne, was only gained after many decades of work and tireless negotiation, and the sacrifice of both time and money by committee members. The end result, however, has been a superb native plant garden, providing the people of Victoria with a place where they can both enjoy and learn more about their own native flora.

Miss Maud Gibson died on 5 April 1970, but the benefits of her generous grant continue. The activities outlined in the preceding pages clearly illustrate that although the existence of the Trust Committee and, later, that of the Research Committee have not been widely known, their contributions to the Botanic Gardens have been of enormous value.

APPENDIX ONE

Deed from Maud Margaret Gibson, First Party, to Ballarat Trustees Executors and Agency Company Limited, Second Party, 2 March 1945

Income may be applied (if so recommended by the said Committee) for any one or more of the following purposes....:

1. the purchase, whether in Australia or abroad, of flora for delivery to the said Gardens by or on behalf of the Committee
2. the employment of persons to search, whether in Australia or abroad, for suitable flora for delivery to the said Gardens by or on behalf of the Committee
3. the promotion of botanical research
4. the publication of papers of scientific or educational nature dealing with botanical subjects
5. the furtherance of co-operation between the said Gardens and other botanical institutions in Australia with the development or improvement of flora or the procurement of flora (whether in Australia or abroad)
6. the purchase of land for use as a plant nursery in connection with the said Gardens, or for use for any other purpose conducive to the maintenance, development, replacement, increase or improvement of the flora in the said Gardens
7. the purchase of equipment for use in connection with the said Gardens or in connection with any land purchased under sub-clause (6) hereof.

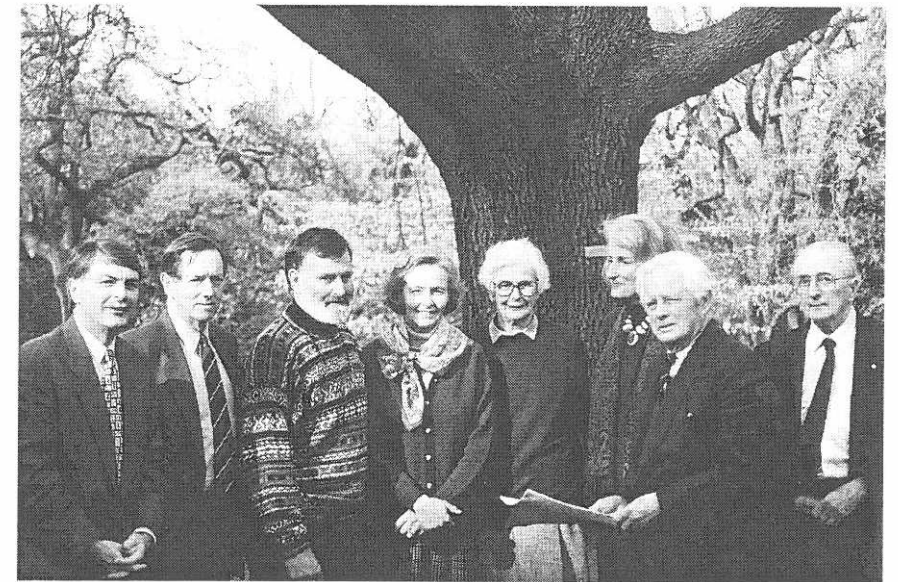
APPENDIX TWO

Membership of the Maud Gibson Trust Committee, 1945-95 (alphabetical)

Baillieu, Judy	1989-	(6 years)
Carnegie, Carmen	1990-	(5 years)
Chambers, Carrick	1974-86	(12 years)
Churchill, David	1971-91	(20 years)
Elliot, Rodger	1992-	(3 years)
Grassick, Frederick	1945-61	(16 years)
Grimwade, Russell	1945-55	(10 years)
Howson, Peter	1961-	(34 years)
Isaac, C. E.	1956-61	(5 years)
Jessep, Alexander	1945-57	(12 years)
Knox, Bruce	1986-	(9 years)
Law-Smith, Joan	1979-90	(11 years)
Limb, George	1992-	(3 years)
Mann, Frederick	1945-52	(7 years)
Michell, A. G. M.	1950-56	(6 years)
Moors, Phillip	1992-	(3 years)
Murdoch, Elisabeth	1961-89	(28 years)
Pescott, Richard	1957-72	(15 years)
Ritchie, Lynton	1973-78	(5 years)
Taylor, John	1989-92	(3 years)
Turner, John	1945-73	(28 years)
Wadham, Samuel	1956-72	(16 years)

Membership of the Botanic Gardens Research Committee, 1965-95 (alphabetical)

Brookes, Marion	1988-	(7 years)
Chambers, Carrick	1965-86	(21 years)
Churchill, David	1971-94	(23 years)
Howson, Peter	1965-	(30 years)
Knox, Bruce	1986-	(9 years)
Moors, Phillip	1992-	(3 years)
Pescott, Richard	1965-86	(21 years)
Ramsay, Thomas	1980-87	(7 years)
Rouse, John	1983-	(12 years)
Turner, John	1965-84	(19 years)
Wadham, Samuel	1965-72	(7 years)
Wilson, John	1973-91	(18 years)



Members of the Maud Gibson Trust Committee and the Botanic Gardens Research Committee, 1996.

(From left to right): Dr Phillip Moors, Mr George Limb, Mr Rodger Elliot, Mrs Marshall Baillieu, Mrs Marion Brooks, Lady Carnegie, the Hon. Peter Howson, Dr John Rouse. Absent: Professor Bruce Knox.

Membership of the Maud Gibson Trust Committee, 1945-95 (by year)

Note: The Trust deed which established the Maud Gibson Trust specified that the Committee should include the Director of the Botanic Gardens²²⁰ [B.G. director] and the Professor of Botany at the University of Melbourne [Univ. of Melb.].

Membership dates from first attendance at meetings of the Trust Committee.

1945

Sir Frederick Mann (chairman)
Mr Alexander Jessep [B.G. director]
Professor John Turner [Univ. of Melb.]
Mr Russell Grimwade
Mr Frederick Grassick

1950

Sir Frederick Mann (chairman)
Mr Alexander Jessep [B.G. director]
Professor John Turner [Univ. of Melb.]
Sir Russell Grimwade
Mr Frederick Grassick
Mr A. G. M. Michell

Appointed, 7 November 1950

1952

Professor John Turner (chairman) Appointed chairman, February 1952
[Univ. of Melb.]
Sir Frederick Mann Resigned, February 1952
Mr Alexander Jessep [B.G. director]
Sir Russell Grimwade
Mr Frederick Grassick
Mr A. G. M. Michell

1955

Professor John Turner (chairman)
[Univ. of Melb.]
Mr Alexander Jessep [B.G. director]
Sir Russell Grimwade Deceased, 2 November 1955
Mr Frederick Grassick
Mr A. G. M. Michell

1956

Professor John Turner (chairman)
[Univ. of Melb.]
Mr Alexander Jessep [B.G. director]
Mr Frederick Grassick
Professor Sir Samuel Wadham Appointed, 17 April 1956
Mr A. G. M. Michell Resigned, 17 April 1956
Hon. C. E. Isaac Appointed, 25 October 1956

²²⁰The Botanic Gardens became the Royal Botanic Gardens [R.B.G.] in 1957.

1957

Professor John Turner (chairman)
[Univ. of Melb.]
Mr Richard Pescott [R.B.G. director] Appointed, 22 May 1957
Mr Frederick Grassick
Professor Sir Samuel Wadham
Hon. C. E. Isaac
Mr Alexander Jessep Resigned, 1957 (retirement as R.B.G. director, 27 March 1957)

1961

Professor John Turner (chairman)
[Univ. of Melb.]
Mr Richard Pescott [R.B.G. director]
Professor Sir Samuel Wadham
Mr Frederick Grassick Resigned, 27 July 1961
Hon. C. E. Isaac Resigned, 27 July 1961
Hon. Peter Howson Appointed, 9 October 1961
Lady Murdoch Appointed, 9 October 1961

1971

Professor John Turner (chairman)
[Univ. of Melb.]
Dr David Churchill Appointed, 1971
[R.B.G. director] (R.B.G. director, April 1971)
Professor Sir Samuel Wadham
Dame Elisabeth Murdoch
Hon. Peter Howson
Mr Richard Pescott Retired as R.B.G. director, August 1970 (but agreed to remain on Committee)

1972

Professor John Turner (chairman)
[Univ. of Melb.]
Dr David Churchill [R.B.G. director]
Mr Richard Pescott Resigned, December 1972
Professor Sir Samuel Wadham
Deceased, 18 September 1972
Dame Elisabeth Murdoch
Hon. Peter Howson

1973

Professor John Turner (chairman) Resignation, 1973 (after retirement from Chair of Botany, Univ. of Melb.)
[Univ. of Melb.]
Dr David Churchill [R.B.G. director]
Dame Elisabeth Murdoch
Hon. Peter Howson
Mr Lynton Ritchie Appointed, 1973

1974

Professor Carrick Chambers (chairman) Appointed, 1 January 1974
 [Univ. of Melb.]
 Dr David Churchill [R.B.G. director]
 Dame Elisabeth Murdoch
 Hon. Peter Howson
 Mr Lynton Ritchie

1978

Professor Carrick Chambers (chairman)
 [Univ. of Melb.]
 Dr David Churchill [R.B.G. director]
 Dame Elisabeth Murdoch
 Hon. Peter Howson
 Mr Lynton Ritchie Resigned, 24 August 1978

1979

Professor Carrick Chambers (chairman)
 [Univ. of Melb.]
 Dr David Churchill [R.B.G. director]
 Dame Elisabeth Murdoch
 Hon. Peter Howson
 Lady Law-Smith Appointed, 22 February 1979

1986

Hon. Peter Howson (chairman) Appointed chairman, 29 May 1986
 Professor Bruce Knox [Univ. of Melb.] Appointed, 1986
 Professor Carrick Chambers Resigned, 27 February 1986
 (to become director of Sydney B.G.)
 Dr David Churchill [R.B.G. director]
 Dame Elisabeth Murdoch
 Lady Law-Smith
 Mr John Taylor Appointed as an observer,
 29 May 1986

1989

Hon. Peter Howson (chairman)
 Dr David Churchill [R.B.G. director]
 Professor Bruce Knox [Univ. of Melb.] Resigned, 23 February 1989
 Dame Elisabeth Murdoch
 Lady Law-Smith
 Mrs Marshall Baillieu Appointed, 23 February 1989
 Mr John Taylor Appointed, 23 February 1989

1990

Hon. Peter Howson (chairman)
 Dr David Churchill [R.B.G. director]
 Professor Bruce Knox [Univ. of Melb.]
 Lady Law-Smith Resigned, 22 February 1990
 Mrs Marshall Baillieu
 Mr John Taylor
 Lady Carnegie Appointed, 30 August 1990

1991

Hon. Peter Howson (chairman)
 Dr David Churchill [R.B.G. director] Resigned, 28 November 1991
 Professor Bruce Knox [Univ. of Melb.]
 Mrs Marshall Baillieu
 Mr John Taylor
 Lady Carnegie

1992

Hon. Peter Howson (chairman)
 Dr Philip Moors [R.B.G. director] Appointed, 26 November 1992
 Professor Bruce Knox [Univ. of Melb.]
 Mrs Marshall Baillieu
 Mr John Taylor Resigned, 26 November 1992
 Lady Carnegie
 Mr George Limb Appointed, 27 February 1992
 Mr Rodger Elliot Appointed, 27 February 1992

1995

Hon. Peter Howson (chairman)
 Dr Philip Moors [R.B.G. director]
 Professor Bruce Knox [Univ. of Melb.]
 Mrs Marshall Baillieu
 Lady Carnegie
 Mr George Limb
 Mr Rodger Elliot

Membership of the Botanic Gardens Research Committee, 1965-95 (by year)

Note: There was sometimes a delay between nomination for membership of the Research Committee and the receipt of formal approval from the CSIRO. In the following list, membership has been calculated from the first attendance at meetings of the Research Committee.

1965

Professor John Turner (chairman)
 [Univ. of Melb.]
 Mr Richard Pescott [R.B.G. director]
 Professor Sir Samuel Wadham
 Hon. Peter Howson
 Dr Carrick Chambers

1966

Professor John Turner (chairman)
 [Univ. of Melb.]
 Mr Richard Pescott [R.B.G. director]
 Professor Sir Samuel Wadham
 Hon. Peter Howson
 Dr Carrick Chambers
 Dr David Churchill Appointed, 28 March 1966

1972

Professor John Turner (chairman)
[Univ. of Melb.]
Mr Richard Pescott [R.B.G. director]
Professor Sir Samuel Wadham Deceased, 18 September 1972
Hon. Peter Howson
Dr Carrick Chambers
Dr David Churchill

1973

Professor John Turner (chairman)
[Univ. of Melb.]
Dr David Churchill [R.B.G. director]
Mr Richard Pescott
Hon. Peter Howson
Professor Carrick Chambers
Mr John Wilson Appointed, 19 July 1973

1974

Professor Carrick Chambers (chairman) Appointed chairman, February 1974
[Univ. of Melb.]
Dr David Churchill [R.B.G. director]
Professor John Turner
Mr Richard Pescott
Hon. Peter Howson
Professor Carrick Chambers
Mr John Wilson

1977

Professor Carrick Chambers Leave of absence – overseas
Hon. Peter Howson (acting chairman)
Dr David Churchill [R.B.G. director]
Mr Richard Pescott
Mr John Wilson

1978

Professor Carrick Chambers (chairman)
[Univ. of Melb.]
Dr David Churchill [R.B.G. director]
Professor John Turner
Mr Richard Pescott
Hon. Peter Howson
Mr John Wilson

1980

Professor Carrick Chambers (chairman)
[Univ. of Melb.]
Dr David Churchill [R.B.G. director]
Professor John Turner
Mr Richard Pescott
Hon. Peter Howson
Mr John Wilson
Sir Thomas Ramsay Appointed, 20 March 1980

1983

Professor Carrick Chambers (chairman)
[Univ. of Melb.]
Dr David Churchill [R.B.G. director]
Professor John Turner
Mr Richard Pescott
Hon. Peter Howson
Sir John Wilson
Sir Thomas Ramsay
Dr John Rouse Appointed, 31 March 1983

1984

Professor Carrick Chambers (chairman)
[Univ. of Melb.]
Dr David Churchill [R.B.G. director]
Professor John Turner Resigned, 29 March 1984
Mr Richard Pescott Leave of absence
Hon. Peter Howson
Sir John Wilson
Sir Thomas Ramsay
Dr John Rouse

1986

Hon. Peter Howson (chairman) Appointed chairman, 28 August 1986
Professor Carrick Chambers Resigned, 28 August 1986
(to become director of Sydney B.G.)
Professor Bruce Knox [Univ. of Melb.] Appointed, 1986
Dr David Churchill [R.B.G. director]
Mr Richard Pescott Deceased, 1986
Sir John Wilson
Sir Thomas Ramsay
Dr John Rouse

1987

Hon. Peter Howson (chairman)
Professor Bruce Knox [Univ. of Melb.]
Dr David Churchill [R.B.G. director]
Sir John Wilson
Sir Thomas Ramsay Resigned, 26 November 1987
Dr John Rouse

1988

Hon. Peter Howson (chairman)
Dr David Churchill [R.B.G. director]
Professor Bruce Knox [Univ. of Melb.]
Sir John Wilson
Dr John Rouse
Mrs Marian Brookes Appointed, 26 May 1988

1991

Hon. Peter Howson (chairman)
 Dr David Churchill [R.B.G. director]
 Professor Knox [Univ. of Melb.]
 Sir John Wilson
 Dr John Rouse
 Mrs Marian Brookes

Resigned, 28 November 1991

1992

Hon. Peter Howson (chairman)
 Dr Philip Moors [R.B.G. director]
 Professor Bruce Knox [Univ. of Melb.]
 Dr David Churchill
 Dr John Rouse
 Mrs Marian Brookes

Appointed, 26 November 1992

1994

Hon. Peter Howson (chairman)
 Dr Philip Moors [R.B.G. director]
 Professor Bruce Knox [Univ. of Melb.]
 Dr David Churchill
 Dr John Rouse
 Mrs Marian Brookes

Resigned, 24 February 1994

1995

Hon. Peter Howson (chairman)
 Dr Philip Moors [R.B.G. director]
 Professor Bruce Knox [Univ. of Melb.]
 Dr John Rouse
 Mrs Marian Brookes

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**Royal Botanic Gardens library
 Maud Gibson Trust Records**
*Box One***File: Minutes Botanic Gardens Research Committee**

Date range: November 1965–February 1986

File: Taxation

Date range: March 1965–May 1970

File: Correspondence, Minutes etc.

Date range: November 1950–April 1956

File: Miscellaneous Correspondence and Minutes

Date range: 1965–1970

File: W. H. Nicholls Orchids Project

Date range: June 1946–December 1949

File: Annual Reports

Date range: 1957–8, 1958–9, 1959–60, 1960–1, 1961–3, 1963–4, 1964–5, 1965–6, 1966–70

*Box Two***File: New Flora Handbook**

Date range: 1946–85

File: Correspondence, Minutes etc.

Date range: May 1944–31 December 1950

File: Ballarat Trustees & Works

Date range: July 1948–July 1952

File: Sir Frederick Mann

Date range: February 1950–March 1952; August 1953

File: Dr Melville's Visit

Date range: November 1951–October 1952

File: New Committee Members

Date range: July–October 1961

File: Minutes

Date range: March 1945–December 1976

File: Minutes

Date range: May 1977–May 1994

Annual Reports

1992, 1993, 1994

**Royal Botanic Gardens library,
interview transcripts**

Transcript of interview conducted with Mr Peter Howson by Eve Almond,
1 September 1994

University of Melbourne Archives

Professor John Turner's papers, box 25B, LS 7/24-29/-
Professor Carrick Chambers papers, five boxes labelled 'Cranbourne Annexe'

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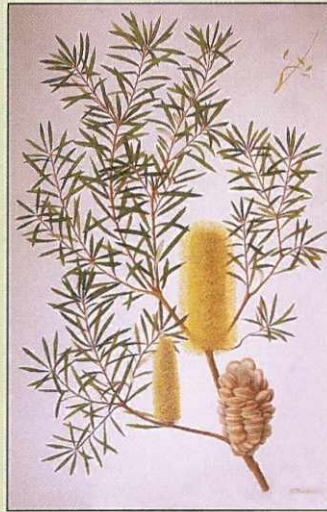
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A Vision Shared: The Maud Gibson Trust, 1945-1995

A Vision Shared marks the fiftieth anniversary of the Maud Gibson Trust established by Miss Maud Gibson in 1945 for the benefit of the Melbourne Botanic Gardens. The history documents the extraordinary variety of projects the trust funded – botanical publications and art work, collecting trips to remote locations, plant breeding, and the development of an extensive native garden in Cranbourne. Close attention is also paid to the contribution of the men and women who served on the Trust Committees and their crucial role in shaping and advancing Miss Maud Gibson's original vision.

The Maud Gibson Trust has played an important part in the development of Melbourne's Botanic Gardens, and its history offers insights into the achievements of the trust over fifty years.

Karen Twigg is a freelance historian who has worked extensively in the fields of local and organisational history.