



Friends of the Bible Garden

NEWSLETTER

February 2024



2023 has been the year that proved the value of all the sandstone work and plantings of recent years, as the Garden responded to the attention of so many of the “Friends” and has rewarded us with the growth and colours, of which, I am sure Gerald Hercules Robinson, our founder, would be very satisfied with his legacy.

The main addition to the Garden, in 2023, has been the installation of sandstone stepping stones on each level-in the areas most affected by the foot traffic of our thousands of visitors.

Once again, Charles Mort, stonemason, and colleagues, have performed their task with great skill and the worth of the new paving has been fully justified. The paving was funded by the Northern Beaches Council, utilising funds accumulated from the fees for events held in the Garden during the year. With over thirty weddings and other smaller personal events, held each year, the fees charged by the Council for the events in the Garden, have provided a steady flow of funds to support capital works.

In 2024, we expect to use further of these funds for an extension of the wrought iron railing from the top stairway down the western Pathan steps. The increased use of this narrow path has highlighted the access difficulty for some of our less mobile visitors they seek to make their way to the lowest level. The style of the railing will be similar to that of the main stairway wrought iron railing.

The trees and shrubs of the Garden are continuing to mature and new plantings are at times hard to site. A new Fig (Mark 11:13), the only plant cursed by Jesus, and a Lemon tree (the Citron or Etrog tree of Leviticus 23:40) have recently been sited in the top garden and are flourishing.

The Mulberry Tree (Luke 17:6) in now are large tree, needing regular pruning and shaping so as to maintain view from the road level. All other beds are full of mature shrubs and flowering plants, referenced in the Bible.

We are, however, anxious about one of the Stone Pines (Isaiah 41:19), on the eastern side of the Garden, which is showing signs of dieback. Its is being closely monitored by a Council Arborist and the shelter that both pines provide is important to the milieu of the Garden overall and for the shade in the summer. Through out the year the pines are visited by a large variety of birds, including Black

Cockatoos, and are integral to the overall milieu of the Garden.

This year has seen a rapid turnover of Council representation on the Committee of the Garden, first, Rory Amon took up the Councillor position on the Committee of the Friends, only to relinquish it following his election as the Member for Pittwater. We wish him every success in his new role, i.e. “Representative of the Bible Garden” in the NSW House of Assembly. Councillor Michael Gencher has now been appointed to the Councillor role on the Committee and we look forward to a long(er) association.





It is timely to acknowledge the long standing involvement with the Bible Garden and membership of the Committee of the Friends, of Jill Taylor, the first president of the “Friends” in its current format and who was integral to the foundation of the modern design of the Garden, together with Julie Bennet previously “Curator” of the Garden in earlier times, Virginia Casey, a very early gardener, and Peter Kellaway, Honorary treasurer since the inception of the Garden in its current format. However—more youthful members are required.

That these longstanding contributors are still integrally involved in every aspect of the life of the Garden speaks volumes for the dedication that the Garden inspires. Fortunately with the new membership of the Garden that has taken place in the last year of Hilary Laidlaw and Mark Hancock, we are starting to see the generational change that is necessary for the continuing life of the Garden. However - more youth is required.

Whilst the continuing interest of the Council and its Officers is assured through the original Foundation Documents that established the Friends of the Bible Garden and the role of the Council in it's future, the

personal interest and dedication of a succession of both Pittwater and Northern Beaches Councils and their responsible officers, in particular Jenny Cronan, has been and will be, essential for its future.

Notwithstanding Council interest, The Garden could not survive without the dedicated gardening of over 25 volunteers, who, by occasionally serving on a weekly roster and partaking in one or two “Working Bees”, present the Garden, in all its magnificence, to over 18,000 visitors a year. We are all in their collective debt.

The Annual general Meeting will be held at 3pm, on Saturday 27th April, hopefully in the Garden. All are welcome.

At the time of preparing this newsletter, the Committee comprises:

- Jill Taylor
- Julie Bennett
- Virginia Casey
- Scott King, Secretary
- Peter Kellaway, Treasurer
- Cr. Michael Gencher
- Hilary Laidlaw
- Mark Hancock

**Stuart Spring
President**

You are invited to attend the Friends of the Bible Garden

Annual General Meeting

to be held in the Bible Garden on Saturday 27th April 2024 at 3:00pm

About the Bible Garden

The Bible garden is located at 6a Mitchell Road, Palm Beach NSW Australia.

The Bible Garden is open to the public every day from sunrise to sunset. It is cared for by

Volunteer members of the Friends of the Bible Garden Memorial Inc.

For information contact Stuart Spring Tel: 02 9974 4635 email stuspring1@gmail.com

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