

There have been some major changes at Coolart since our last newsletter. The following two letters will bring you up to date with the latest developments.

LETTER FROM GORDON CAMERON, CHAIRMAN, COOLART COMMITTEE OF MANAGEMENT

Dear Friend of Coolart,

I know you will be saddened to learn that Graham and Sue Pizzey have decided that it is time for them to terminate their full-time involvement at Coolart. We are not however to lose contact with them completely, as Graham has indicated his interest in continuing his association with us in the role of Consulting Naturalist. We will therefore be maintaining links with them in the future.

The Committee of Management and the Friends of Coolart are deeply indebted to Graham and Sue for the expertise, foresight, planning, and hard work which they have contributed to the development of Coolart during the past four years. I'm sure you will all join with me in giving them our thanks and our best wishes for the future.

The Committee will be advertising for a new Warden for Coolart and will hope to make an appointment as soon as possible.

In the meantime we are delighted and very grateful that Jo Eabry has agreed to take temporary responsibility for the shop and the Friends weekday roster for the shop. If there are any Friends who may be able to offer help on Tuesday, Wednesday, or Thursday, especially in the afternoon, Jo would be delighted to hear from them on (059)89 8394.

There will be many adjustments necessary over the coming months until a new Warden is installed and has the Reserve under control. Our other permanent staff of Ken (Robbie) Roberts and Frank Busana are still with us to take care of the grounds and the gardens, however there will undoubtedly be times when assistants are needed.

LETTER FROM GRAHAM PIZZEY, WARDEN OF COOLART

As Sue and I are retiring from our present positions at Coolart on Wednesday, February 29, this will be my last note as Warden.

However, as the Committee have kindly asked me to retain contact with Coolart on a consultancy basis for a two-year period, we will be able to have a continuing hand in the present development programme - the establishment of further wetlands; the tree-planting programme; the anti-smilax programme; woodland conservation and the potentially severe problem of loss of the paperbarks in the lagoon from over-use by ibis. Also I would hope to do rather better than we have in the past with graphics, interpretation and art shows in the main house.

For those who have expressed surprise at our "sudden" departure, I feel I should say that I advised the Committee in early December that we wished to depart at the end of February.

Our reasons are several: the original appointment in April 1980 was for a three-year period. This was never formally extended. In other words, we came for 3 years and stayed nearly four. Also, day-to-day management and dealing with bookings has become quite busy, and there has been little chance to function as a naturalist, which is my profession.

With a new, probably younger warden to take on those things, this problem should be overcome while the development programme continues.

Another concern is that my bird Field Guide must be brought up to date in a Second Edition. This will require more time and more extensive field work in 1984 than was compatible with the Warden's position.

Sue's role in the shop, stock-keeping and the maintaining of Friends' records and renewals, and maintaining the Friends' weekday roster is being taken over for the present by Jo Eabry.

Jo is very capable but will need all your support. There is much detailed work in that job now that Friends' memberships exceed five hundred people, (taking family memberships into account). Incidentally we now have over sixty life-members!

Margaret Booker has been the capable anchor-person in the kitchen, tea-room, and shop on Sundays, while Don has acted as outdoors trouble-shooter and outdoor-volunteer anchor-person. This role has helped maintain continuity and has deserved all our support.

All-in-all we think our present move is best for Coolart and best for us.

Sue and I both want to say how much we've enjoyed the past four years, and how much we have appreciated the work and the warm and generous support given us by the Friends, and want to especially thank Marion and Ian Taylor for their energy, helpfulness and never-failing unflappability under, occasionally, very trying circumstances!

We'll do our best to remain active at Coolart, and feel that the Friends will go from Strength to strength.

The fact is that Coolart could not function without you.

FRIENDS' FAREWELL TO GRAHAM AND SUE

All Friends are invited to a barbecue at Coolart on Saturday, 31st March, starting at 4.00pm. Graham has agreed to take us on a walk around the reserve before the barbecues are lit at 5.00pm and we are sure that all of you would like an opportunity to talk to him and Sue.

Salads, bread, and drinks will be provided by the Friends Committee, but Friends should bring their own meat for barbecuing.

A presentation will be made to Graham and Sue at 6.00pm, and for those who want to stay on, tea, coffee, and biscuits will be served later in the house.

For catering purposes we will need to know numbers, so if you are coming, please ring Marion Taylor, (03) 568 0253 or (059) 82 1580, by Sunday, 25th March.

We hope that as many Friends as possible will take this opportunity to say goodbye to Graham and Sue.

EASTER DAY STALL

A stall will be held at Coolart on Easter Day, Sunday, April 22, from 11.00am. Donations of homegrown produce and homemade cakes and jams will be welcome, and we would like to hear from any Friends who could help on the day.

FRIENDS OF FRIENDS DAY

On Saturday, 12th May from 11.00am, Friends are invited to bring their friends to a BYO barbecue lunch at Coolart. There will be no admission charge for 'non-Friends' who are guests of Friends and we hope that some will decide to become Friends.

Barbecues will be lit at 12.00 noon and a film featuring Graham Pizzey will be screened in the house at 2.30 pm.

Dear Friend of Coolart,

2/84?

Attached is the blank roster sheet for Open Days in June, July, August, and September. As before, please mark the days and times when you are able to help at Coolart on Sundays, and mail it to the address shown on the sheet. A complete roster will be sent to all helpers as soon as it has been compiled.

If any Friends are able to help on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, or Thursdays, please list the details in the space at the end of the roster sheet. Although we have a group of regular weekday helpers, we would appreciate knowing any others who could help in an emergency.

Farewell to Graham and Sue Pizzey

About 80 Friends attended a barbecue at Coolart on Saturday, 31st March, when we said goodbye to Graham and Sue. Our farewell gift to them was Life Membership of the Friends of Coolart, and we hope to see them at many of the Friends' functions after they return from the field trip which Graham needs to update his bird guide.

You will also be pleased to know that Graham is continuing as consultant to the Coolart Committee of Management, so we will not lose touch with him and Sue.

New Warden for Coolart

120 applications were received for this position, and after a long process of selection and interview, Steve Yorke was appointed as our new Warden. He and his wife Linda moved into the flat at Coolart during Easter, and Steve was on duty on Easter Day. He has had considerable experience as a ranger with the National Parks Service, and, following their marriage, he and Linda travelled extensively in Asia visiting many National Parks.

Linda is an experienced secretary, and is keen to involve herself in activities at Coolart. We welcome them both, and look forward to working with them and getting to know them.

Stall, Easter Day

Over \$200.00 was raised from the sale of cakes, preserves, and plants. Many thanks to all who helped by sending donations, organising and staffing the stall, and buying the goods.

Friends of Friends Day, Saturday, 12th May, from 11.00 am.

Remember to bring your friends to Coolart on Saturday for a BYO barbecue. The gates will be open at 11.00am and barbecues will be lit at 12.00 noon. At 2.30 pm, (and again at 3.30pm if required), we will be screening the film 'Westernport Bay; the Ecosystem', featuring Graham Pizzey. There will be no charge for 'non-friends' who are guests of Friends, and we hope some of them will decide to become Friends.

Tree Planting, Sunday, 20th May, 10.00 am for a 10.30 am start.

We hope to plant another batch of trees, especially along the entrance drive, before the winter sets in. Please bring whatever tools you need, some gardening gloves, and a barbecue lunch. We should finish the planting during the morning and enjoy a lunch together afterwards, (drinks provided).

New Projects at Coolart.

Following a submission to the Community Employment Program, the Committee of Management have received approximately \$160, 000 to build an auditorium/bird hide overlooking the wetlands area, repair and extend paving, and layout a formal brick-paved herb garden in the old vegetable garden area. The design and site for the auditorium/hide have already been selected, and the Committee are to consult with an architect very soon.

Special Interest Groups.

Both the Management and Friends' Committees have agreed that we should try to set up groups of Friends who have special interest and/or expertise in particular aspects of Coolart. The following areas have been suggested, and you may be able to think of others - the garden, the plant shop, (especially propagation of cuttings), publicity for Coolart, guides to conduct parties of visitors, birdhide supervisors. (We have a loyal group of 'birdo's' who staff the hide, but we could do with more).

I have attached a separate sheet which you may like to fill in and return if you are interested in this project.

Lavender Bags.

Jean Ellis would like to know if any ladies are interested to meet at Coolart on one Sunday every two months to make lavender bags for sale in the plant shop. There is a space to fill in on the Special Interest Groups sheet if you would like to join the Lavender Ladies.

COOLART NEWSLETTER 3/84 AND SUNDAY OPEN DAY ROSTER

Dear Friend of Coolart,

The blank roster sheet for Sundays from October, 1984, to January, 1985, is attached to this newsletter. As many of you will know, for each Sunday on which Coolart is open help is needed from the Friends in the following areas: at the gate to take entrance fees and supply brochures and information to visitors; in the bird-hide to assist viewers to identify any birds they may see; in the shop selling a range of stationery and books; in the kitchen preparing and serving teas; in the plant and produce shop which we hope to set up during this spring and summer.

Please mark on the blank roster the days and times when you are able to help at Coolart and mail it to the address shown on the sheet. A complete roster will be compiled and copies sent to all volunteers.

Although we have a group of regular week-day helpers who staff the shop on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays, we would appreciate further offers of help on those days, especially from anyone who is available during the busy January holiday period when it is often necessary to staff the gate as well as the shop. A separate section is provided on the blank roster for week-day volunteers.

Any help which the Friends can give, either on Sundays or week-days, is greatly appreciated. As funds from government sources become scarcer organisations such as Coolart must rely more heavily on their own efforts to make up the balance needed for day to day running costs as well as new projects.

Exhibition of prints

A collection of prints by Chinese artist Siqing Zhou is on display at Coolart. Friends and their friends are invited to view the prints and meet the artist on Sunday, 30th September. Siqing Zhou visited Coolart while he was in Australia on a previous occasion. Many of his prints feature Australian animals and birds and his application of traditional Chinese woodcut techniques to modern themes makes this an interesting and unusual collection.

Wine and cheese will be served in the Friends' room between 3.30 and 5.00 pm.

Annual General Meeting and Tree Planting. Sunday, 11th November.

We hope to have a good attendance for a tree planting in the morning - 10.00 am for a 10.30 am start - followed by our Annual General Meeting at 2.00 pm. Bring a barbecue or picnic lunch, drinks provided, and make it a Friends Day at Coolart. Also please bring whatever tools you prefer to use and some gardening gloves.

Nomination forms for the Friends' Committee will be enclosed with our next newsletter.

Visit to Serendip and Werribee Sewerage Farm. Saturday, 24th November.

The Friends' Committee hope to arrange an all day bus trip and BYO picnic to see the birdlife at Serendip and Werribee. It is intended that the bus will pick up and return passengers at Frankston Shopping Centre and Spencer Street Station - a 9.30 am start from Frankston is proposed. The cost would be approximately \$7.00 per person. If you are interested in this visit please fill in the space provided on the roster sheet. Further information will be available in the next newsletter.

Tree Planting. Sunday, 2nd December.

For those who are unable to come on November 11th, and for those who just like planting trees, a further day has been arranged. As before, please be at Coolart by 10.00 am for a 10.30 am start, and bring gardening gloves and any tools you require.

Have a BYO picnic or barbecue lunch, drinks provided, and finish off the day with more planting, or a walk around Coolart to see what's been happening since the last time you were there.

Christmas in the Stables. Saturday, 15th December.

Our annual Christmas Get-together will follow the pattern established in previous years. The gates will be open from 4.00 pm, and Friends and their families are invited to bring a barbecue tea and enjoy carols in the stables afterwards.

Drinks and supper will be provided and the evening will end at approximately 9.30 pm. Our next newsletter will give more detailed plans.

Message from the Warden, Steve Yorke.

This is our first opportunity to say hello to all the Friends, and that Linda and I hope to meet you all some time. We've thoroughly enjoyed our first months living here, and we're quite settled in now. Coolart is indeed a wonderful place, and we feel quite privileged to be involved in all the improvements being made. Our gratitude goes to all the Friends who have done so much to make Coolart what it is today, and we hope you will continue to be involved. There's lots of work to be done yet, but I'm sure that between us all, we can make Coolart the perfect place for both people and wildlife.

It has been quite dry since Easter, allowing a great deal of work to be done. We've managed to do a lot in the garden, with weeding, trimming and adding leaf mould to the beds. Even at the end of Winter, the garden is a picture. Thirtysix "old-fashioned" roses have been planted and these have just started to bud. They should be something to see next year, if not later this year. Repairs to the hand-made brick outhouses are continuing, and we hope to be able to display some of the old artifacts in the near future. The Community Employment Program project is well underway with fencing and preliminary work on the bird hide/auditorium. Mudbrick making has started.

The dry Winter, with only 137 mm since April, has meant that the water in the lagoon is still very low, and has only just started to rise. Very few ibis were present in May and June, but now about 300 are roosting here each night. Courtship has just started, and it looks as if nesting may be late this year. We've

built a few platforms with paperbark trunks recently, to try to take some pressure off the living trees, and it will be interesting to see whether the ibis will nest on them. One of the platforms is just in front of the hide, and we hope visitors can more easily see the chicks being raised. There are about 80 black duck and chestnut teal on the lagoon and wetlands as a resident population, with visits by numbers of grey teal and wood duck. Dusky moorhen, eastern swamphen and little pied cormorants are permanent; a pair of coots has just arrived. Altogether, about 60 - 70 species of birds can be seen on a visit to Coolart at the moment; I only wish I had more time to be out there observing. If any of the Friends can come and help with sightings, it will be much appreciated.

Plans for more treeplanting are under way, and some were planted during an Australian Trust for Conservation volunteers task in the August school holidays. These went in along the entrance drive and the coastal woodland. Treeplanting days are planned for the Friends later in Spring, so please reserve 1st November and 2nd December to come and help. Remember, the more the merrier! With all these trees going in, though, there is more and more maintenance, weeding, mulching and recycling of stakes and guards. If you can help at any time, please let me know, and we can get stuck into it.

We try to have Fridays and Saturdays off, but we're here the rest of the time. Again, Linda and I would like to meet all the Friends, and you are all welcome at any time to come and help or just visit and enjoy.

News of Graham and Sue Pizzey

Graham has just finished work on a new book which is due for publication in April 1985, and he and Sue hope to get away for a short field trip, and to work on the update of the Bird Guide. They are still looking for a permanent home and have been visiting various possible sites around Victoria.

In his capacity as consultant to the Committee of Management, Graham has been advising on ways of coping with the problems of the death of paperbarks in the lagoon, the loss of foliage from trees along the Woodland Walk, and the general smilax infestation.

We hope to see them at our end-of-year functions.

Dear Friend of Coolart,

This is the last newsletter for 1984 and the Friends Committee send their best wishes for Christmas and the New Year.

Annual General Meeting and Tree-planting. Sunday, 11th November.

As reported in the previous newsletter we would like all helpers to arrive at approx. 10.00 am, complete with tools and gardening gloves. We can then start planting at 10.30 am and work through until 12.30 - 1.00 pm. After this we will have a BYO barbecue lunch, (drinks provided), in the stables and start the AGM at 2.00 pm.

Arrangements for the AGM.

The meeting will be held upstairs in the room normally used for the slide/talk presentation to visitor groups. (This talk will be given at 12.00 noon on this day).

The Agenda and Nomination Forms for the Friends Committee are attached. Any financial member of the Friends of Coolart may nominate. Completed forms should be posted to:

Friends of Coolart Committee,
P.O.Box 84,
Balnarring. 3926.
Victoria.

or brought with you to the meeting and handed to any member of the present committee at the start of the meeting.

Please ensure that the form is signed by the nominator, seconder and nominee.

As there is no fixed number of committee members an election may not be necessary.

To allow all interested Friends to attend the AGM, alternative staffing arrangements will be made for the gate and the shop, and no teas will be served during the meeting.

Visit to Serendip and Werribbee Sewerage Farm. 24th November.

As not enough people expressed interest this trip has been cancelled.

Tree Planting and Working Party. Sunday, 2nd December.

In addition to some tree planting there is need to clear out overgrown areas along the Woodland Walk. Helpers are asked to arrive at 10.00 am for a 10.30 am start and bring with them tools and gardening gloves. A BYO picnic or barbecue lunch, (drinks provided), will follow, and keen workers may like to tackle the job again in the afternoon.

Christmas in the Stables. Saturday, 15th December.

Our final function for the year will be the annual 'Christmas in the Stables' event - a BYO barbecue tea with drinks and supper provided. Please note that the gates will be open at 3.00 pm, not 4.00 pm as previously stated. This will allow Friends and their families to spend some time looking around before the Warden is ready to lead a conducted tour of the reserve at 4.00 pm.

Barbecues will be ready for use at 5.30 pm and 'Carols by Barbecue Light' will begin at approximately 7.00 pm. Song sheets and musical accompaniment will be provided. Supper will be served in the house at the end of the evening.

Exhibition of Australian Prints.

During November and December some of the Gould and other historical prints owned by the Ministry of Conservation will be on show at Coolart.

AGENDA

1. Apologies
2. Minutes of the 1983 Annual General Meeting (attached).
3. Report - Chairman, Coolart Committee of Management. Mr G. Cameron.
4. Report - Friends of Coolart and Friends of Coolart Committee. Mrs M. Taylor.
5. Report and slide presentation - Warden. Mr S. Yorke.
6. Friends of Coolart Committee Members, 1985.
7. General business.

There will be a short combined meeting of the retiring and incoming Friends Committees immediately after the AGM.

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held at Coolart on Saturday, 19th November, 1983, at 2.00 pm.

1. The meeting was attended by approximately 50 Friends.
 2. Report - Committee of Management. Mr Gordon Cameron, Chairman, gave a brief account of the main activities of the Committee during 1983.
 3. Warden's Report. Mr Graham Pizze reported activities and events at Coolart during the year and discussed plans and recommendations for future development of the Reserve.
 4. Friends of Coolart. Mrs Marion Taylor thanked Friends for their help on weekdays and Sundays during 1983 and listed the special activities - Christmas in the Stables, stalls, working bees, the Rotary Club's Spring Evening at Coolart - which had been arranged for Friends. Membership stood at 338 individuals.
 5. Friends of Coolart Committee. The Committee met once after the previous AGM and six times during 1983, (including 1 combined meeting with the Committee of Management and 1 extraordinary meeting). They had organised a variety of functions including a photographic competition, the register of trees planted, and the Christmas meeting.
 6. Committee for 1984. The following were declared elected - Mr B. Benton, Mrs J. Eabry, Mrs A. Enting, Mr M. Ferguson, Mrs J. Hodgson, Mrs B. Smith, Mrs M. Taylor.
 7. Friends Representative on the Coolart Committee of Management. Mrs M. Taylor was elected for a three year period.
 8. The meeting closed after some general discussion.
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