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ASSOCIATION OF SOCIETIES FOR GROWING AUSTRALIAN PLANTS
ACACIA STUDY GROUP NEWSLETTER No. 76

MAY 1996

Dear Members

I had intended to issue a newsletter in February but there was nothing to hand to put in it. There's not much more now. This makes getting a newsletter together difficult and it is the depressing part about being Leader of this Group.

LEADERSHIP No one has come forward to take over leadership of the group. One member looked at the possibility of taking it on but declined, because of some commitments and uncertainty about what they would be doing in future. So I will continue for ONE MORE YEAR on a reduced basis. This may involve some delay in sending off seeds, which with a few exceptions that depended on circumstances, I have tried to get away promptly. Unless there are contributions from members, I will not attempt 3 newsletters per year and IF there are no contributions you may well receive a blank sheet of paper.

THE FUTURE OF THE ACACIA STUDY GROUP DEPENDS ON THE CONTRIBUTIONS MADE BY ALL MEMBERS.

I like hearing from members and pieces from letters can be used but what is really required are articles about acacias. I appreciate the contributions made over the past four years but there has not been enough of them. If you have not written an item how about doing so and if you have then another one would be welcome.

MEMBERSHIP FEES are due on 1st July. I have decided to set the fees for current Australian members at \$2-25 (5 45¢ stamps - if you don't want to write a cheque). This will cover the cost of 2 newsletters. New members because of seedlist costs etc. will remain at \$4. There is a membership status statement on the back of the address panel. Members who have not paid by the issue of the next newsletter will be considered unfinancial.

There are some copies of "WATTLES ARE GOLDEN" on hand and they are still available to members for \$5-40 (posted) (14 45¢ stamps) - a limit of ONE copy per member at this price. Non-members or additional copies are \$6-75. If you have most of the newsletters there will not be much that is new, but for newer members it contains a lot of information from the group's past.

On February 1st Jeff Irons visiting from England called on me, accompanied by his wife Betty and John Morris of Mildura who was showing them around Victoria. It was interesting to meet one of our overseas members.

The **SLIDES** are progressing slowly although I didn't get much done over the spring and summer. Winter provides more time indoors so I hope to complete the first two sets soon. It is necessary to have a good idea of what is required in the "Introduction" set before the other two sets can be finalised. Bruce.

FRED ROGERS

Master of native flora

School principal and author

Born: December 17, 1927

Died: March 16, 1996

FRED ROGERS was thrown into his teaching career at the deep end.

At 17, he was too young to enrol at teachers' college, and instead was sent to tiny country schools as their only teacher.

Mr Rogers did get to study at Ballarat Teachers' College, where he met his bride, June.

The couple married at Horsham's old St John's Anglican Church in 1952 and lived near Ballarat before settling at Ringwood in 1954.

While in Melbourne, Mr Rogers was a teacher and headmaster at schools in Yarra Park, Clifton Hill, Mooroolbark, North Ringwood and Donvale.

Many of his friends and colleagues describe his influence on his students as inspirational.

He also had a great love for native flora, and was a member of the Ringwood Field Naturalists Club and the Society for Growing Australian Plants.

He was SGAP state president from 1980 to 1988 and was involved in founding the society's federal and its Maroondah and Wipac groups.

Mr Rogers led and organised field excursions, gave more than 2000 lectures and was on radio for many years.

He also wrote several books.

In 1971, the Rogers returned to Horsham and in 1977 moved

to nearby Vectis, where they turned their bare block into a native botanical garden to attract wildlife.

Mr Rogers' son, Peter, said his father was a man who "combined enthusiasm with organisation".

"He would set a goal and work methodically and persistently to achieve it — whether it was furthering education, digging over gardens by hand, writing his books or building a grandfather clock," Peter said.

"He was an inspiration, a coach, a guide, a supporter and a friend to many."

"One of his mottos was, 'Don't fail for want of trying — give it a go!'"

Peter said his father's love of nature led to the whole family enjoying school holidays all over Australia.

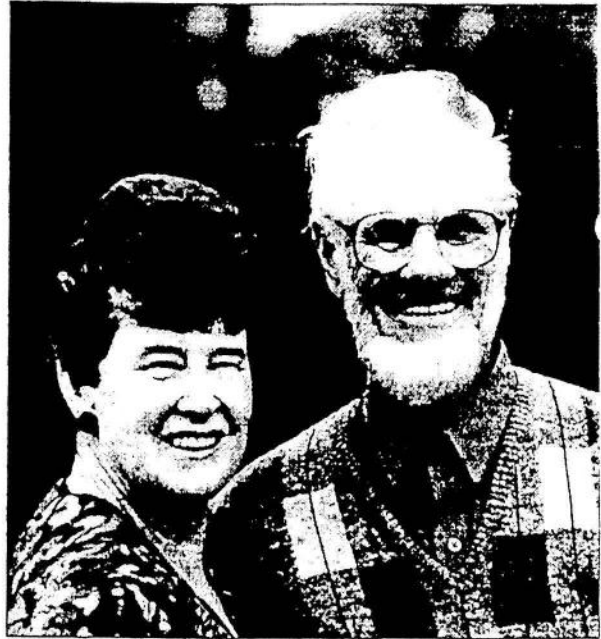
"We didn't go down to the beach, we went camping in the Little Desert, the Big Desert, the Bendigo Whipstick area or anywhere that Dad needed a photograph of a special plant," he said.

"It was Dad's love and appreciation of nature, especially plants and animals, that he passed on to us."

In 1968, Mr Rogers approached the Ringwood City Council on behalf of the SGAP, offering to look after a block of native bushland in Heathmont, which he did for several years.

The council named the block the F.J.C. Rogers Reserve.

In 1991, he was awarded the Australian Natural History Med-



Fred and June Rogers

allion for his contributions to botany.

A keen sportsman, Mr Rogers played countless seasons of football, cricket, baseball and tennis for city and country clubs.

He was once invited to play district cricket for Richmond, and was nicknamed "Ironman Rogers" after pitching 15 innings straight in a baseball grand final.

Mr Rogers established base-

ball clubs in Ringwood and Horsham, and was presented with the Victorian Provincial Baseball League's Special Services Award.

He was a member of the Masonic Lodge for more than 40 years, and was well regarded by his brethren.

Mr Rogers is survived by June and children James, Peter, Suzanne and Patricia, and 10 grandchildren.

All SGAP members as well as Acacia Study Group members were saddened to learn of the death of Fred Rogers on 16 March. Fred had been a member of the Acacia Group for many years and among other books on Australian plants had written "A Field Guide to Victorian Wattles". He used to say that, "Acacias are a disease for which there is no cure".

On Sunday 19 May I attended a tribute to the outstanding life of Fred Rogers, organised by the Marcondah SGAP Group at the Ringwood Secondary College Hall. Chaired by ASGAP President Cherree Densley the 200 plus people assembled heard speakers tell of Freds involvement in the many fields in which he wholeheartedly participated. This left every one asking, "How did he find the time for it all". Fred will be greatly missed by all who knew him. Fred's obituary from the Herald Sun of March 27 is reproduced on page 2.

SEED BANK: There are a few new and restocked species in the seed bank although information on some of them is lacking. They are: *A. baileyana* "aurea", *brunioides*, *costiniana*, *halliana*, *idiomorpha*, *maslinii*, *nematophylla*, *palustris*, *pataqiata* and *varia* var. *parviflora*.

A. baileyana "aurea" has a golden touch to the foliage.

A. brunioides is a spring flowering (approx. 2m.) shrub from heaths and woodlands of the east Q'ldNSW border area. Ball flowers.

A. costiniana is a rare shrub, variable in size, spreading or to 2m., multi-stemmed. Its ball flowers occur in spring.

A. halliana occurs in N.W. Victoria and for a considerable distance into adjacent NSW and SA. It is has previously been included in *A. microcarpa*.

A. idiomorpha is a spreading or compact shrub, found near Shark Bay in WA. A variable species flowering in June - August it requires good drainage and is suitable for growing in containers. It has globular flowers.

A. pataqiata is common from Pingrup to near Mt. Ney. it is a round shrub 0.5 - 2.5 m. tall with stiff incurved phyllodes and golden globular flowers which occur July - September.

A. varia var. *parviflora* is from the Albany - Mt. Barker area in WA. It is, as the name implies variable in form, but has green bipinnate foliage, pale yellow globular or short spike flowers and flowers February - September.

Australian members are reminded to send a SAE with their seed requests otherwise they will not be sent. Overseas member's postage etc. is covered by their fees. Remember to include a few alternative choices with your requests as some species are in short supply.

MEMBERSHIP STATUS AND SUBSCRIPTIONS -

Records show you are: Financial until *June '96*

Your fee for continued membership for 1996-7 is:

Please *Do NOT pay fees beyond 1996-7 until the future of the group is known.* *\$2.25*.....

Please return this section which has your address on the otherside with your subscription. Members unfinancial when the next newsletter is issued will be deleted from the mailing list.

If you belong to a district group of SGAP please indicate which group.

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Alan Bately of Neutral Bay NSW, although not a member of our group sent me a seed pod of *Acacia dunnii* which he had collected at Wyndham crocodile farm, WA in May 1994. "The leaves are quite extraordinary, up to nearly a foot long, and shaped like an Elephant's ear. I was told locally that it's called Elephant's ear wattle.

I successfully germinated the seed, but unfortunately it all damped off, and I have no memento of my visit, other than a leaf and some empty pods."

I tried several seeds, hopeful that they might survive through the summer months as foliage plants, but like Alan's they quickly damped off before there was any "elephant ear shaped" phyllodes. The seeds I used have been in the seedbank for a long while so apparently the seed keep well.