

## **Trees Capturing the Essence of the Geelong Botanic Gardens, Artists Views**

The Geelong Botanic Gardens is very fortunate to have a Botanic Art School. The is managed by the Friends and attracts students who are inspired by plants and keen to develop their talent.

Three Botanic Artists tutor students, encouraging them to develop skills and learn new techniques. The blend of their passion for plants, our beautiful garden and an art form that demands both accuracy and creative expression results in the school producing wonderful art. You have the opportunity to see some of these at the Geelong Gallery exhibition during the Conference.

The 'Trees' project has been coordinated by **Dolores Skowronski - Malloni** and her enthusiasm for the project is infectious. For those of you who haven't had the pleasure of meeting Dolores yet she is a botanical artist who trained in Graphics and Interior Design in Buenos Aires, Argentina and gained a Bachelor of Arts in Melbourne at Monash University. Dolores has been a practising botanical artist since 1993. Her work develops in a theme format, always searching for a new subject to challenge her imagination.

In this instance her trees theme has challenged and inspired many students over a two year period. This theme has firmly connected the students to the magnificent tree collection at the gardens. The body of work created explores a range of techniques and records the personality and features of many of the gardens amazing trees.

Paintings of trees, details of bark, flowers, leaves and seeds evoke wonder in the beauty of looking more closely. The viewer has been given a unique perspective of every tree featured.

I for one am very grateful to Dolores for celebrating our trees in such a creative way. I commend the artists on their achievements and thank them for the development of this wonderful book. The artists views will change how people see and appreciate our tree collection.

I declare the book 'Trees Artists Views; Capturing the Essence of the Geelong Botanic Gardens' officially launched. I invite Dolores to speak.