

Banksia Book at Herbarium

by Vicki Hamley

"The Banksia Book" Vol. 2 was presented to the Herbarium by author Alex George on October 20.

This book is the result of collaborative work between Alex who is a botanist with a particular love of Banksias, and Celia Rosser, whom Alex describes as 'one of the finest botanical artists in the world.'

Unfortunately Celia couldn't attend the presentation due to the pilots' strike.

This magnificent book measures 56 x 78 cm — big enough to accommodate Celia's wonderful life-size watercolours.

It is a limited edition of only 730 copies describing and illustrating 24 Banksia species.

Volume 1 was published in 1981. It took another seven years to complete vol. 2 and vol. 3 is scheduled to be completed by 1993.

The completed series will describe all 75 species of Australian Banksias.

The paper for all three volumes was specially hand-made in England, but apart from this, vol. 2 was totally produced in Australia.

The Banksia Book is a Monash University project and has been donated to the Herbarium as acknowledgement for its contribution towards logistical support.

'Everyone helped,' said Alex, even by driving Celia and myself around to collect botanical specimens or by

processing the specimens.'

Alex thanked CALM for assistance with permits to collect Banksias, including gazetted rare species. All botanical specimens used for the paintings will be lodged in the WA Herbarium.

Director of Research Andrew Burbidge, who accept-

ed the book on behalf of the Herbarium and CALM, praised its quality.

"It is scientific, of a high academic standard and is very readable," he said.

"Celia Rosser's paintings are not only very accurate pictures of Banksias, they are also works of art."



Jim Armstrong (left), Alex George and Andrew Burbidge admire the Banksia Book.