

Dovyalis

Friends of Bendigo Botanic
Gardens Inc. Newsletter

Issue 5, Autumn 2017

Garden for the Future



In this issue:

1 Contents and Progress on the
BBG Master Plan

2-3 The Deer Statue - Helen
Hickey

4-6 Floriography - Brad Creme
(curator)

6 A Tale of two Koels - Anne
Bridley

7 What have we here? Jan Orr

8 What's on



The Pavilion 2009



The Pavilion 2017



Perennial Border Autumn 2017

This newsletter is named after
Dovyalis caffra,
the South African Kei Apple Tree
which is a heritage listed tree
in the Bendigo Botanic Gardens



Builders' huts and fencing in place



Plants ready for GFTF

Stage 2 of the Master plan

Works on the Garden for the Future are underway. The outreach shelter at the south end will be the first area to be constructed with works continuing to progress northwards. The earthworks will soon start to take shape. 2017 is the 160th anniversary of the Bendigo Botanic Gardens, White Hills and it is fitting that after a decade of progress since the 150th anniversary, we will finally have a contemporary and dynamic expansion of the gardens being built this year.

A lot has been said already on the tourism, commercialisation and events that the project will facilitate but I'd like to talk about the horticulture and the landscape design. TCL and Paul Thompson have developed the concept and plant list based on certain design themes. Some of the key themes that you'll see in the finished garden include *combinations/parallels/opposites, the simple and the diverse, the hardy and the non-hardy, the known and the unknown, the common and the uncommon, the reliable and the experimental, the structural and the ephemeral.*

First time visitors will learn how to 'climate-change-proof' their garden using careful plant selection and plants which will survive Bendigo's extreme weather conditions with temperatures ranging from -4 to 46 degrees. They will enjoy experiencing beautiful plants and beautiful scenes, with many wow factors and photo opportunities along the way.

The garden will feature three main precincts. The *Fun and Fantasy Garden* will be organised chaos and include the unexpected mixing of Australian and exotic plants together in new and unusual ways. The *Making Connections around the World* and *Making Connections around Australia Gardens* will be loosely divided into three sections each, the *form and foliage* area, the *fruit* [in the botanical sense] area and the *floral* area. These are the spaces where we will be able to tell stories about plants, plant groups and the cultural uses of the plants.

Rather than designing distinct garden rooms to showcase a single concept such as medicinal plants of Northern Africa, TCL have spread these stories throughout a bold, 3D landscape that encourages the visitor to explore, question and confront what they thought they knew about plants and gardens. New plant collections will include Abutilon, Acacia, Agapanthus, Agastache, Agave, Ajuga, Aloe, Anigozanthos, Arbutus, Artemisia, Austrodracynis and Austrostipa and that's just the 'A's!

There will be over 26,000 plants and over 500 new species and cultivars. The challenge for us horticulturists, tour guides and story tellers will be to not only learn all the new names, but to learn about the story of each plant, how it was used by the people who lived near it for food, medicine, ceremony or raw materials, is it hardy or non-hardy, is it reliable or experimental, is it structural or ephemeral and how can we use it in our own Bendigo garden today. As gardeners, we are always still learning! Enjoy the ride.

Brad Creme - Curator

The Deer Statue

- a detective story by Helen Hickey

What do you call a deer with no eyes? (No idea)



It's like a mix between an Agatha Christie novel and *Where's Wally* – the mystery and intrigue that follows the most beloved of White Hills' statues involves distinguished gentlemen, brazen acts of theft and bad jokes.



1952

Most Parks and gardens can boast of beautiful vistas, enhanced with a statue or two, a picturesque lake, or maybe a hot house, all wonderful places of happy memories. But for visitors to the Bendigo Botanic Gardens, White Hills, a trip was incomplete without a photo with or on the statue of the Deer. Even the sign cautioning 'Do not climb on the Deer' failed to dampen enthusiasm.

Because who could resist? *It's the Deer!*

The statue of the Deer remains a mystery and relentless research has brought to light many interesting and questionable results. Nonetheless, tracking its history has led us to Royalty, Lord Hopetoun, (Australia's first Governor- General), local farmers, the Peatling family of Bagshot, George Lansell 'the Quartz King', Bendigo Business families and the Bendigo City Council.

This isn't a case of Whodunnit but more of Whoputitthere?

Evidence of live deer and other animals in the gardens has been well documented. An article in the Bendigo Advertiser records;

"The reserve is not very well represented in the zoological portion, the only animals at present that are worth seeing being a pair of deer recently forwarded by the Melbourne Acclimatization Society. The animals have become very tame, and will prove a very valuable and interesting addition to the attractions of the gardens." (1855)

Under Curator Gadd (1873-1903), 48 new garden beds were created in the gardens, and lawns and borders created. A path hierarchy existed, with gravelled paths of 4 different widths in existence. The stockade or paddock containing animals was dismantled and remodelled to contain flower beds and lawn, and some of the animals including deer were dispersed to new locations and a new aviary constructed on the 'island'.

In his annual report of 1858, Ferdinand Mueller, whose title for several years was Director of the Botanic and Zoological Gardens, noted that the Melbourne Botanic Gardens at the time contained 'an aviary and a menagerie, with emus, one Sumatra tiger and twelve English fallow deer, some monkeys, native bears and wallabies'. Many regional botanic gardens have contained fauna displays associated with the acclimatisation movement in the nineteenth century including Ballarat, Camperdown, Warrnambool, Port Fairy and Williamstown. Only Bendigo and Hamilton Botanic Gardens continued until recently.

One Royal figure to grace our city was Lord Hopetoun. This distinguished guest officially opened the new gallery premises in Drury Court at the Bendigo Art Gallery to the public on 14th October 1890. During a later visit in 1891 he is said to have been so impressed by James Peatling's first class stag hounds that he gave him a deer. The story suggests the deer was presented to the 'White Hills' Botanical Gardens and that the statue of a deer which still exists is modelled on that animal. It makes for a great story - however a search of the Public Records Office Victoria did not provide any proof.

As it was probably a private gift, rather than an official one, any letters regarding it would probably be in the private papers of the Governor - Lord Hopetoun's private papers are somewhere in England (perhaps in a deer enclosure).

The Deer Statue continued

Notes taken from the Bendigo Advertiser in April 1923 record that the Peatling family of Bagshot were reported to have donated to the council a kangaroo, a deer and wallaby. They were conveyed to the Botanical Gardens at White Hills and placed in the Acclimatisation Reserve. No further information or how the animals survived has been found. While the era of animals in botanic gardens has long gone (though the monkeys only departed in 1973) the gardens have been enhanced with fountains, ferneries and beautiful statues. Our statue of a cast iron male deer, (sans antlers) stands proudly near the main entrance.

Its date of arrival is uncertain, though we do know that our statue most likely came about as a result of an auction at Fortuna. George Lansell, often referred to as 'the Quartz King', prospered during the 'Gold Boom' of 1871. His villa Fortuna was extremely opulent in the full Victorian style and he searched all over the world for statuary, stained glass etc.

A photo taken in 1893 at Fortuna, by the upper lake, clearly depicts two deer and the caption with this photo says, 'I do believe one of these bronze statues of deer is now at the Botanical Gardens in White Hills'.

"Fascinating Miss Marple!"

"Thank you my dear."

In June 19 1934 - *The Argus* Newspaper (Melbourne, Vic : 1848 - 1957 outlines a summary of the auction held at Fortuna.

"Bendigo, Monday - At the first sale to-day of the furnishings and effects at Fortuna, the mansion of the Late Mr. and Mrs. George Lansell, the lots were principally from the grounds and gardens. Four Carrara marble figures from Rome were passed in at sixty pounds, but later sold at that figure to Mr. J. McClelland, who was acting for a client, Mr. R. J. Hartley, of Melbourne, who bought a pair of stone eagles which he intends to present to the Eaglehawk Borough Council. He formerly lived at Eaglehawk. He also bought a life-size cast iron deer and other small marble pieces which he will offer to the Bendigo City Council. A children's seesaw that Mr Hartley bought will be presented to St Luke's Toddlers Home at White Hills."

From the Finance Committee records of the Bendigo City Council, 28th June 1934, an article mentions the 'Presentation of Statues' J.R. Hartley, intimating that he has purchased a statue of a deer which he desired to present to the Council.

"At last, the mystery unfolds Miss Marple!

"Jolly good, this story is taxing me dearly".

A Mr Jack Wallace was the caretaker in the gardens when the deer was installed. The deer statue was in the Council Depot, McCrae St near the Chinese area in the 1940s. Mr Wallace saw it and decided to use it in his restoration/upgrading of the gardens in the early 1940s. It is remembered as being first located near the curators house.

Today the deer is a well recognised treasure in our gardens.

For over many decades it has withstood the severity of climate, the affection of children and visitors alike. However, it has been the target of vandalism; the antlers that gave our deer a majestic stance disappeared some years ago.

So to conclude:

Who was responsible for The Deer in the gardens?

Was it:

- Ferdinand Mueller in the Aviary?
- Lord Hopetoun in Kensington Palace?
- Or George Lansell in Fortuna?

I'm afraid that at this stage, I STILL HAVE NO IDEA.

Helen Hickey

Private investigator



Editor's Note: The 'Stag' deer has now become a 'Doe'

Floriography

Brad Creme - Curator, Bendigo Botanic Gardens



The pink lily symbolises youthful passion, joy, beauty and friendship and is often given to new mothers. The white lily symbolises purity and the return of the soul after death to a peaceful state of innocence. White lilies are often displayed at funerals.



19th Century board game
“Floral Lotto”.

Floriography was introduced to me by Jane Cleary when she brought in a family board game from the 1870's called 'Floral Lotto'. It teaches the players about the meaning of different plants and the object is to match the flower with the emblematic sentiment on the playing cards. Players learn the botanic and common names of various plants along the way. After a bit of research I discovered that many cultures have, and continue to use plants and floral metaphors to communicate ideas and express themselves.

Think of floriography as the 'emojis' of their day. Plants were used to express difficult or taboo feelings when you couldn't find the right words. Plant symbolism is also heavily used in literature and art to express metaphors and other ideas without the use of words. It was popular in the conservative societies of 19th Century Victorian England and mainland Europe as well as in Japan and China. The Japanese art of *Hanakotoba* uses plants as codes and passwords to communicate emotions. Many plants displayed in the Bendigo Botanic Gardens *Cottage Garden of the Victorian Goldfields* also have secret meanings to those in the know.



The most common example of floriography is the giving of a red rose to someone as a way of saying 'I love you'



Floriography continued

The colour and number of roses can also convey meaning. Yellow roses convey friendship and remembrance while a yellow rose with a red tip can mean I'm falling in love with you. A single rose can mean you are the only one while 13 roses can mean you are my secret lover.

Other popular choices in floriography include Alstroemeria (friendship and devotion), Iris (faith and hope), Tulips (comfort and warmth), Carnations (fascination, hearty and affordable) and Orchids (exotic seduction).

Floral metaphors have been used by authors throughout history such as Shakespeare (a very knowledgeable gardener as well), Jane Austen as well as both Charlotte and Emily Bronte.

Here's an example of the meaning of plants from Shakespeare's Hamlet:

Ophelia: There's **rosemary**, that's for remembrance. Pray you, love, remember. And there is **pansies**, that's for thoughts.

Laertes: A document in madness! Thoughts and remembrance fitted.

Ophelia: There's **fennel** (strength, flattery and deceit) for you, and **columbines** (folly, resolved to win). There's **rue** (regret, as in 'you will rue the day') for you, and here's some for me. We may call it herb of grace o' Sundays. O, you must wear your rue with a difference! There's a **daisy** (innocence). I would give you some **violets** (remembrance/faithfulness/modesty), but they wither'd all when my father died. They say he made a good end.

(https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shakespeare_garden)



Victorian publication

References to floriography also 'crop up' throughout the J.K. Rowling's Harry Potter series. 'Aunt Petunia' was named because petunias are easily damaged and best grown in a container with protection from the environment. Lily Potter was named because lilies refer to beauty, elegance, sweetness and innocence after death. Snape also refers to monkshood (chivalry), wolfsbane (dislike of others), asphodel (remembered beyond the tomb) and wormwood (regret), all themes used throughout the series.

Floriography is often used in painting, sculpture and even in stained glass windows, to convey meaning about taboo topics such as love, sex and death.

Image: Ophelia (1852) by John Everett Millais

A drowning scene from Hamlet where the plants tell the story. Artistic license allows plants which don't flower together to be used in the same painting. Plants included are:

- Buttercups (ingratitude and childishness)
- Weeping willow (forsaken love)
- Nettles (sharp and stinging pain)
- Daisies (innocence and virginity)
- Purple Loosestrife (sex)
- Pink roses (youth, love, beauty)
- Violets (forgetfulness, chastity, a young death)
- Red poppies with black seeds (sleep and death)
- Forget-me-nots (Forget me not)

Floriography continued

Other plants have significant meanings which have evolved over time depending on the culture they arose in. Mistletoe used to be a sign for a safe, non-violent meeting place, but has now become a place to kiss. Gorse meant *love in all seasons* but is now considered more of a noxious weed in Australia. Hibiscus means *rare and delicate beauty* and is now frequently used as a metaphor for all things related to femininity and women.

Red poppies used to mean *death* but have now come to mean *remembrance of fallen soldiers* as they were the first flowers to emerge from the battlefield in Flanders, Belgium. White poppies also refer to death but now have come to refer to *pacifism and opposition to war*. To the Japanese, the cherry blossom represents gentleness, kindness and a good education but in China it is more linked to feminine beauty.

Floriography might be superseded these days by social media, emoticons and memes but it probably predates language and agriculture as a way to court a partner or show affection for someone you love. Ask your local florist (or google) about the meaning of certain flowers the next time you buy a bouquet for a friend.



In China, bamboo is seen as a symbol of longevity, strength and grace and the segments are said to symbolise the steps along the way to enlightenment.

A Tale of Two Koels

Anne Bridley - member FBBG

Last November a Common Koel was seen in the Botanic Gardens. This slim black migratory cuckoo may be known to those travelling up north by their loud calls. Is it a sign of changing climate that in the last decade or so it has made its way to Bendigo and may now be heard here regularly in the warmer months? Koels are also found in Asia, which brings me to a second Asian Koel. It can be seen in the cottage gardens near Scott St – a fine specimen of *Koelreuteria paniculata*, the Golden Rain Tree and coincidentally, the Koel is also known as the Rain Bird because it calls in the wet. However, *Koelreuteria* was named after German botanist Josef Kolreuter and the bird name may be onomatopoeic and of Indian origin.



What have we here?

Jan Orr - president FBBG



The impressively large plant with the flax-like strappy leaves, that grows next to the southern verandah of the Samuel Gadd Centre was a real attention grabber last Spring.

It produced 5 enormous flower spikes that filled that corner of the gardens with a most vibrant scarlet red. As it grows near the meeting room windows, gardeners, friends and visitors were able to follow its slow development from flower spike to full inflorescence and finally fruit. It has produced copious seed pods.

It's called *Doryanthes palmeri* or Spear Lily.

It is an Australian native plant found in south-eastern Qld and north-eastern NSW. I've not seen *palmeri* in the wild but it would be a standout plant in any environment. It seems to be able to cope with our cooler growing conditions very well. (Is this a result of the milder winters we have had recently?) Its flowers attract honeyeaters and bees. The bird in the photo is a Blue-faced Honeyeater. This bird's range extends up the east coast and across the top of Australia to as far as the Kimberleys. It is one of the larger honeyeaters, (30 - 32 cm in length) and gives a fair indication of the size of the flowers.

There is another *Doryanthes* species growing in the Botanic Gardens. It's in the heritage cottage garden and called *Doryanthes excelsa*, or Gynea lily. This species I have seen. It grows in NSW near the coast and ranges north of Sydney and in forests along the south coast.

In spring and summer it produces a bunch of brilliant red flowers, (about the size of a netball), atop a tall vertical stem (they can be as high as 4 metres).

I was lucky to catch them in full flower and the bush looked like a mass of stop lights. Aborigines used this species as a food plant. They ground the roots to a powder and made a paste that they cooked before eating.

Over the years there have been several plant donations to the gardens and this plant was given about 12 years ago, by Friends member Dennis Mayor's brother Chris and his wife Janet. It came as a piece from a very large specimen growing in Chris and Janet's garden in Quarry Hill. It took herculean labour from Dennis, Chris and Rod Orr to prise off a modest chunk from the enormous plant (crowbar, pick and axe had been called for). The plant has clearly settled in and thrived in the gardens as I think this is the third time it has flowered. The reference books I've read state that it can take 10 years to produce a flower spike.

Sadly Dennis has died and Chris is unwell but I call this plant "Mayor's Marvel" and remember them as I sit by the window when I'm doing Botanical Illustration.

References:-

Frances Bodkin Encyclopaedia Botanica
Tim Low Bush Tucker- Australia's Wild Food Harvest
Wrigley & Fagg Australian Native Plants

What's On -

The Friends' Monthly General Meetings are open to all members .

They are held at Bendigo Botanic Gardens Samuel Gadd Centre - 2.30pm on 3rd Tuesday of the month (except January).

Office bearers are elected for 2 year terms and the annual meeting is held in August.

Growing Friends

Propagate plants for the gardens and for sale as well as assist the BBG park staff in the gardens.

They meet: 2nd and 4th Tuesdays and 1st and 3rd Wednesdays of the month (9:30am - 11:30am) at FBBG nursery (behind the Samuel Gadd Centre).

Plants are available for sale during Growing Friends on the 4th Tuesday of the month. Two major sales are held each year in Spring and Autumn.

Botanical Illustration Group

Meet Saturdays 9:30am – 4.00pm & Wednesdays 9:30am – 12.00pm at the BBG Samuel Gadd Centre. New members welcome.

May 13th 2017	FBBG Plant Sale 9am-2pm	FBBG Plant Nursery BBG Enter via Napoleon Cres
May 20th 2017	Australian Association of Friends of Botanic Gardens: Annual General Meeting	Canberra see www.friendsbotanicgardens.org
May 24th 2017	Growing Friends Working Bee and Plant Sale 9.30am-11.30am	FBBG nursery BBG. Enter via the gardens.
May 28th 2017	Botanical Gardens Open Day 10am - 2pm Illustrators, Plant Sale and Guided Walks	Bendigo Botanic Gardens, Napier Street White Hills.
June 27th 2017	Growing Friends Working Bee and Plant Sale 9.30am-11.30am	FBBG nursery BBG. Enter via the gardens.
July 25th 2017	Growing Friends Working Bee and Plant Sale 9.30am-11.30am	FBBG nursery BBG. Enter via the gardens.
August 15th 2017	FBBG Annual General Meeting	Samuel Gadd Centre. BBG
August 22nd 2017	Growing Friends Working Bee and Plant Sale 9.30am-11.30am	FBBG nursery BBG. Enter via the gardens.
October 22th - 25th 2017	BGANZ 8th Congress. 'Preservation: Exploring and Adapting.'	National Wine Centre, Adelaide www.bganz.org.au



The Children's Garden 2017

Dovyalis is published by the Friends of Bendigo Botanic Gardens,
Inc. 71 Napoleon Cres. Bendigo 3550

Email: friends.bgobotanicgardens@gmail.com

Website: www.bendigobotanicgardens.com.au

Bendigo Botanic Gardens Office: (03)54484321

President: Jan Orr **Vice President:** Delene Commerford

Secretary: Judy Milner **Treasurer:** Annie Clark

Committee Members: Anne Bridley, Helen Logan, Jane Cleary, Lyn Hamilton, Helen Hickey, Kevin Shanahan, Hilary Tovey, and Eric Wilkinson.

Newsletter Committee: Delene Commerford, Helen Hickey, Judy Milner, Jan Orr, Hilary Tovey.

supported by

City of Greater Bendigo

