

Dovyalis

Friends of Bendigo Botanic
Gardens Inc. Newsletter

Issue 7 Autumn 2018

Garden for the Future

New garden extension officially opened.

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GFTF garden beds



GFTF paths

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



The opening of the Garden for the Future occurred on April 22nd, officiated by Greater Bendigo Mayor, Cr Margaret O'Rourke. It was a beautiful Autumn day and large numbers of visitors were present for the opening and the associated activities.



Informative guided walks focusing on the horticultural features were run by Brad Creme (City Parks Curator) and Jane Cleary (FBBG) and occurred hourly between 11am and 2pm.

We congratulate the COGB council and all the COGB staff who were involved in bringing this impressive first stage of the BBG Master Plan to fruition.



Garden For the Future - A Planting Odyssey.

Kirstie Paterson - Leading Hand Bendigo Botanic Gardens



The story begins back in the winter of 2017 when thousands of plants started arriving at the Mackenzie Street nursery (we were anticipating a spring planting at the beginning of the project); of course

that season was an extremely cold and frosty one and a few plants were lost before they reached the gardens. The cussonias, ceibas and crassulas to name but a few were early casualties as well as some of the Western Australian Eucalypts. It was one of the coldest winters I can remember.

A few substitutions were made early in the project after the results of the frost were seen.

In October, construction started on the site with a great deal of excitement, and you could start to see the dramatic changes in the landscape with the contouring and topographical changes really impacting the site.



After a few months of delayed construction we were given the go ahead to start the planting of the GFTF.

So with a lot of excitement and a little trepidation, on the 19th of January 2018, we (myself, Sandra and Lonain) started the journey that involved us planting the 27,000 plants, shrubs and grasses making up the new extension of the Botanic Gardens.

I won't say they were ideal planting conditions, they were actually some of the toughest, soaring temperatures to 40+ degrees, strong winds and no rain, but as we planted we could see the formation of a botanic garden taking place.



We started on the International side of the gardens and worked our way clockwise around the outside of the garden to the Australian side, concluding with the Fun and Fantasy beds in the centre. Of course we couldn't plant the whole garden on our own; we needed the extra help, so thankfully the parks and open space team stepped in and gave us the extra hands needed to help plant up the gardens.

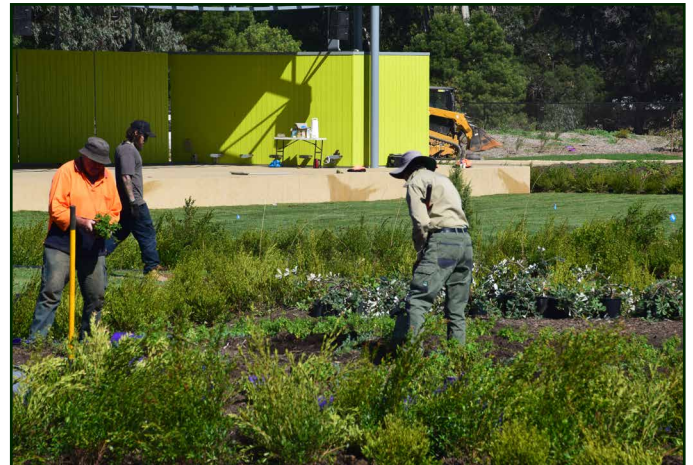
I'm sure it was weird for our bushland team to plant a lot of exotic plants (in their minds weeds), and the Arboriculture team to plant grasses, but as they say a change is as good as a holiday and everyone thoroughly enjoyed themselves.

Garden for the Future - A Planting Odyssey continued.

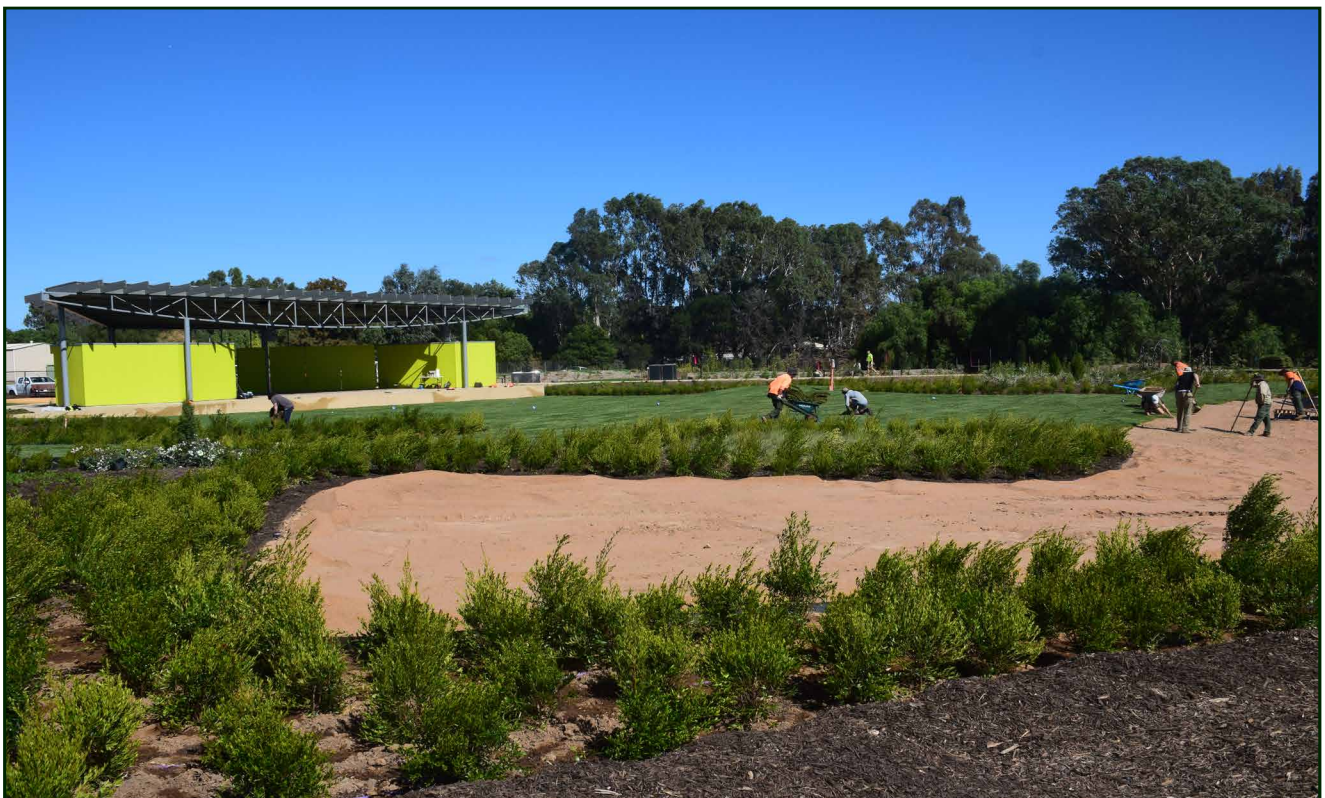
It has been a wonderful learning experience as all the new plants arrived onsite, to learn about their maintenance requirements, their origins and what makes them a great addition into the garden.

The GFTF will be an evolving garden, which will take several years to establish, but already the foundations are there to see what a wonderful garden it will be. The staff are grateful that we have been given the opportunity to be involved in the creation of the GFTF and to know that our hands have touched nearly every aspect of the gardens.

Please enjoy the gardens now they are open and know that the staff will take care of both the heritage and the GFTF sections of the garden with a great deal of pride.



*Drone Image of the site
Jan 2018*



The Children's Garden

Helen Hickey - FBBG member

"Begin at the beginning," the King said, very gravely, "and go on till you come to the end: then stop."

Lewis Carroll, Alice in Wonderland

The above quote seems to me to be an excellent way to not only introduce my subject, but also to provide good advice for an amateur writer. So, in the spirit of Lewis Carroll let's make our way down the rabbit hole that is history before making a quick exit from the keyboard.

Mirrors, royal thrones, mazes and croquet, the Alice in Wonderland theme for the White Hills Children's garden was inspired by landscape architect Justine Image "It's a nod to the fact it is a 19th century garden," she claims, "that period has a sense of whimsy and playfulness."

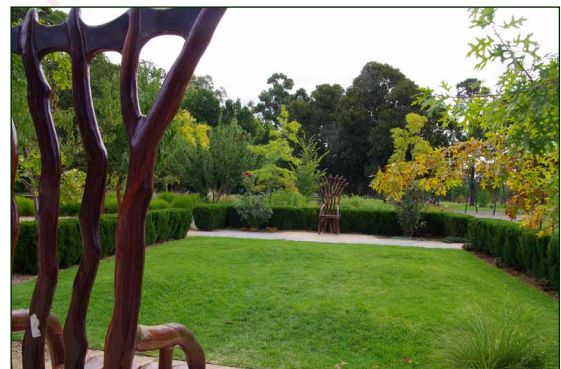
Whimsy it is.

The garden features a series of leafy rooms enclosed by hedges, which encourage children to explore and play imaginatively.

In the secret garden, children discover treasures such as the hidden mirror and the child sized mushroom table and chairs. On the roly-poly lawn children can play croquet or enjoy rolling around on the grassy slopes.



The bravest among them can also climb to the top of the fort overlooking the gardens while the power inclined can sit on an oversized royal throne.



The Children's Garden includes play equipment aimed at two to six year olds, a croquet lawn with a herb and vegetable patch, a secret garden and an oversized checkers board. The hand water pump allows children to water the plants, which has proven to be very popular on hot days. A musical fence with familiar nursery rhymes continues the old world theme.



The Children's Garden continued.

A large variegated elm tree, planted in the early days of the gardens, provides shade.

The 'vegie' patch allows children to observe how our vegetables and herbs are grown. They are an opportunity for children to smell, taste and learn.

The strawberries are always popular!

The much loved Kei Apple tree (*Dovyalis caffra*), more at home in its native South Africa, is a popular place to climb. Even though its thorns are long and sharp it fails to dampen enthusiasm. The Kei Apple dates back to the nineteenth century and reflected the prominent place African plants held in Australian garden history.



The entrance under the canopy features a letter box which is a replica of the now demolished old caretakers house and provides a link to the play space.



Other design features are an arbour of trained Maypole Crab apples adjacent to the vegetable garden. Deciduous trees provide shade in summer and seasonal interest, while hedges enclose the space. Seating is provided for carers, mad hatters and grandparents - sometimes all three.



The garden supports a number of temporary and permanent programmes and activities. These will be developed over time as resources become available and demand grows.

In an era where our population is more urbanised than ever before, spaces like the The White Hills Children's garden are increasingly important for young people to experience nature and outdoor play.

The Alice in Wonderland factor ensures that creativity and imagination abound, and while I still have not caught a glimpse of the White Rabbit, my clock tells me it is time to go.

Tick Tock!

Rosemary: *Rosmarinus officinalis* Family Lamiaceae.

Kevin Shanahan - FBBG member



Rosemary (*Rosmarinus* - from the Latin meaning sea-dew) is a shrub that originated in the Mediterranean area and is now widely cultivated throughout the temperate region. It is steeped in myth, magic and folk medicinal use. Connected to the Christian faith is the story that rosemary will grow for 33 years, the length of Christ's life, and then die. In Elizabethan days the wedding couple wore or carried a sprig of rosemary as a sign of fidelity. Also bunches of rosemary were tied with coloured ribbon tipped with gold and given to guests at weddings to symbolize love and faithfulness. Rosemary was burnt in sick rooms to freshen and purify the air. Branches were strewn in courts of law as a protection from gaol fever. Rosemary for remembrance is a frequently used symbol.

Culinary Use

Rosemary is used to flavour meat (especially lamb), casseroles, tomato sauces, baked fish, rice, salads, egg dishes, apples, summer wine cups, cordials, vinegars and oils.

Harvesting.

As rosemary is evergreen you can pick fresh leaves all year round as long as you're not too greedy. If you have large quantities then harvest in summer and dry the leaves or make rosemary oil or vinegar.

Medicinal

It is believed that Rosemary oil has anti-bacterial and anti-fungal properties and that it helps poor circulation if rubbed into affected joints. The oil can be used externally as an insect repellent and it is also used as a remedy for

headaches being applied directly to the head.

Rosemary tea is sometimes used as a mouth wash for halitosis and as an antiseptic gargle. Drunk in small amounts it is believed to relieve flatulence. An antiseptic solution of rosemary can be added to the bath to promote healthy skin. Boil a handful in 500ml of water for 10 minutes.

Other Uses

Put rosemary twigs on the barbecue; they give off a delicious aroma. If you have a wood-burning stove, a few twigs thrown onto it makes the whole house smell delightful.

Rosemary is used in herbal shampoo and the plant has a long reputation as a hair tonic. Use an infusion in the final rinse of a hair wash, especially if you have dark hair as it makes it shine (use chamomile for fair hair).

You can find *Rosmarinus officinalis* in the children's garden area forming a fine hedge. Other Rosemary forms include those with pink, white and dark blue flowers as well as fastigate and cascading habits.



Reference:

JEKKA'S COMPLETE HERB BOOK, by Jekka McIvor. Royal Horticultural Society.

POTTER'S HERBAL CYCLOPAEDIA, by Elizabeth M. Williamson BSc., PhD, MR Pharms., FLS
WIKIPEDIA

Well it Tricked Me!

Jan Orr - FBBG President

Most Saturdays I can be found in the Samuel Gadd Centre with the FBBG botanical illustrators, working away at the slow, painstaking, and often frustrating business of botanical illustration.

The Sam Gadd Centre, by its central location in the gardens, gives us the opportunity to take refreshing breaks from our activities by taking walks and enjoying the beauty of the plants as they are growing, instead of in a jar of water or a photo in an iPad.

On one particular day in February I was mooching past the arid bed, near the children's playground, when I noticed this remarkable plant. There it was, an agave, with its rosette structure of thick, broad, rigid leaves with strong spikes spaced along their margins culminating in a very sharp spike at the top of each leaf.



But what was this? This plant has fruit growing from the tip of its leaves. I had never seen anything like it. I was amazed. So amazed that I hurried back to tell my fellow illustrators.

Paint brushes and pencils were promptly abandoned and they all marched off to see for themselves. Once there, they looked and smiled, then laughed. For some reason I had brightened up their day.

“Jan,” they said, not too unkindly between laughs, “You have been crab-appled, probably by a cheeky child. The children's garden crab-apple archway is nearby”.

A Flash of Scarlet

Anne Bridley - FBBG member

*A repetitive tinkling call, a flash of scarlet
- what could it be?*

That little creature zipping in and out of dense foliage in October and November 2017 turned out to be a Scarlet Honeyeater.

Conifers, broad leaved trees, eucalypts were all attractive to this small bird.

They also fed on crimson bottlebrush flowers while here. Perhaps gardens well stocked with trees and flowering shrubs reminded them of their home in the coastal forests of eastern Australia.



As south-east Australia had a very dry period, Bendigo's gardens became a temporary refuge for this summer migrant.

I didn't see any of these birds at White Hills, but for a while they enlivened Spring Gully and could be heard along Havlin St.

What's On -

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

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 & 4th Tuesdays and 1st & 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 noon at the BBG Samuel Gadd Centre. New members welcome.

Tues May 8th	Growing Friends	Friends Nursery SGC, 9.30am-11.30am
Sat May 12th	Spring Plant sale	Friends Nursery Samuel Gadd Centre, 9am - 2pm Enter via Napoleon Cres.
Tues. May 15th	FBBG General Meeting	Samuel Gadd Centre BBG, 2.30pm
Wed May 16th	Growing Friends	Friends Nursery SGC, 9.30am-11.30am
Tues May 22nd	Growing Friends and plant sale	Friends Nursery SGC, 9.30am-11.30am
Sunday 27th May	Botanic Gardens Day (BGANZ initiative)	Bendigo Botanic Gardens: Guided Tours and Friends Open Day at SGC. 11am-2pm
Wed June 6th	Growing Friends	Friends Nursery SGC, 9.30am-11.30am
Tues June 12th	Growing Friends	Friends Nursery SGC, 9.30am-11.30am
Tues June 19th	FBBG General Meeting	Samuel Gadd Centre BBG, 2.30pm
Wed June 20th	Growing Friends	Friends Nursery SGC, 9.30am-11.30am
Tues June 26th	Growing Friends and plant sale	Friends Nursery SGC, 9.30am-11.30am



Turning the first sod for the 'Garden for the Future' June 2017

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

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