

Dovyalis

Friends of Bendigo Botanic
Gardens Inc. Newsletter

Issue 9, Autumn 2019



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Entry to the Edwardian Garden
April 2019



Tree Euphorbia - Spiny Forest, Madagascar

See article on Euphorbias pg 6-7

Photos- Rod Orr

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 Year that Was - 12 months on from the Garden for the Future Opening

Kirstie Paterson – Staff Team Leader, Bendigo Botanic Gardens

Wow

It's hard to believe it has been 12 months since the GFTF extension opened.

And what a 12 months it's been.

From opening Day on the 22nd April 2018 it has been non-stop with maintenance, weather unpredictability, and irrigation issues. Not to mention a few concert events thrown in there as well.

We have also had staffing changes. There was a new manager found. Paul Gangell is now the Manager of Parks and Open Space. We have a new co-ordinator of Heritage gardens and Amenity Landscapes (Orrin Hogan) who the Botanic Gardens falls under and we have had two new apprentices start at the gardens, Grace Millar and Claire Lacey.

But let's get back to the GFTF progression....

The best way to explain the progress of the garden is to compare the garden as it was then to what it is now.

I have included some photos that were taken just before the gardens were officially opened and now:



March 2018



March 2019



March 2018



March 2019

You can see the amount of growth the plants have put on in 12 months. It is only when you see the photographs side by side; that you notice the vast growth rates.

Trials and Tribulations.

Of course we had the dreaded frosts kick in from June onwards. Day after day of frosts began to take a toll on the gardens. The grass was forced into dormancy, which meant the lovely green colour disappeared replaced by a yellowy/white coloured lawn. Unfortunately our interpretive signage was lacking and the public thought it had died due to lack of water. (Lesson learned for next frost season, we will make sure the interpretive signage is installed). In the Fun and Fantasy section, the Lilly Pilly hedge *Syzygium smithii* 'Cherry Surprise' took a beating from the continual frosts. The hedge had survived June and July with tip burning, but the frosts in August and September were too much for the plants and major scorching of the foliage occurred. It has grown back now, but we are expecting the hedge to be vulnerable to the frosts again this season; we are currently working with the designers on an alternative hedge species.



June 2018



September 2018 after heavy frosts

With regards to the turf, as soon as the warmth got back into the ground; and with a little fertiliser help, the grass greened up in no time.



March 2019

The Year that Was -

GFTF 12 months on - cont'd

Irrigation...

Who would have thought irrigation would have been such an issue in a new garden (ha ha). Well we do know now! A new system is going to have bugs and issues when it is first installed, and ours seemed to have the giant cicada version happening when we least expected it. It has certainly kept us on our toes. We have had flow and pressure regulation issues (too much water coming through our system), resulting in broken pipes, broken laterals and sprinklers.

Our recycled water comes from two different locations either straight from the reclamation plant, resulting in a clean water supply, or from Spring Gully reservoir which has the added delights of weed, algae and shrimp in our water supply. This has resulted in clogged filters and clogged sprinklers, which is a time consuming task to unblock. Thankfully the weather was HOT which meant fixing irrigation wasn't that bad a task to do...

This leads us into the summer period. January was hard on the gardens as well as on the staff. With weather hitting a peak of 45^o C during the day and night temperatures hitting record highs combined with weeks on end of 35^o C or higher, some of the plants and definitely the staff were showing signs of distress.

Celebrations

Even though I have named a few of the tricky issues that we faced over the past 12 months, I have to say it has been an absolute privilege to be a part of. My fantastic team has put in a magnificent effort to have the garden looking the way it does and every challenge has pushed us to find solutions for a satisfying outcome for all.

It has been great to see everyone coming together to help us present the garden in the best way we can for the community. We've had help from the Parks and Open Space unit, which we used as a team building day when we placed out 90m³ of mulch. We've had help from the 'Garden Friends' Group who come out and weed every Tuesday no matter what the weather presents; which we think is great. We very much appreciate all you do. Keep up the good work!



Garden Friends at work May 20

We have had many events held at the site.

In October a Water Week activity day was run by Coliban Water, NCCMA (Nth Central Catchment Management Authority), Dja Dja Wurrung Aboriginal Group, and the City of Greater Bendigo. This involved children from four primary schools learning about all things water.



Water Week October 2018

The Year that Was -

GFTF 12 months on - cont'd



The Indonesian Exchange Student Association held an exhibition showcasing their culture through dance.

Indonesian Exchange Students Nov 2018

The Summer in the Parks program hosted a very successful concert evening, consisting of music, food trucks and children's activities.

Summer in the Parks February 2019



As you can see it has been a very busy 12 months since the opening, and we hope the pace and excitement continues as this magnificent garden continues to grow and evolve into the premier tourist spot of regional Victoria.

Many thanks to all involved.

Kirstie Paterson

Botanical Illustrators Workshop - Drawing birds in coloured pencil with Pam Sheean

Annie Clark - FBBG member and illustrator.

On Saturday the 6th of April a group of 13 Illustrators gathered at the Samuel Gadd Centre for an in-house workshop on drawing birds with coloured pencil. The presenter was Pam Sheean, one of our illustrators' regulars, who recently has been specialising in illustrating Australian birds.

Previously a keen (and prize-winning) photographer of bird life, Pam has become a skilled and sought after bird artist.

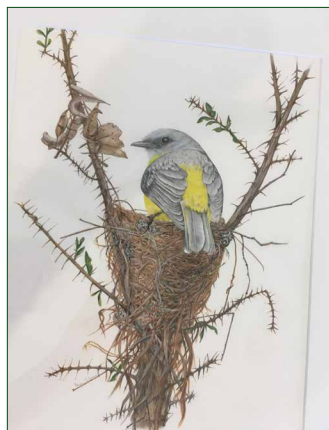
The group came prepared with a simple outline drawing of their bird of choice and a photograph, and Pam proceeded to instruct us with demonstrations and notes about the process of illustration.

Firstly, it was important to select the correct colours we would need - many more than we expected when our subjects were closely examined!

We started with the eye, followed by the beak in careful detail, as this gives a focal point to the whole illustration. Then we were to work carefully and lightly from the top down on the first impression of feathers, going back over and over again adding more detail. It was very challenging work and very time consuming.

By the end of the session participants were starting to show really good work for their first attempts at this task. Pam was a wonderful teacher giving us all help and encouragement when needed.

Many thanks Pam!



Euphorbias

Author and photographer: Rod Orr - FBBG Member

Judy Milner's unfortunate contact (some time ago) with toxic sap in her eye, during pruning of her Euphorbias reminded me of this interesting plant genus - half blinded, she managed to get herself to medical assistance, which led to her recovery. This would be an unforgettable experience but is best avoided by handling these plants with caution.

Many gardeners have a Euphorbia or two in their collection of plants. Several have interesting growth forms, most are very hardy and can withstand dry conditions. Some even have attractive inflorescences, although the actual flowers are usually very small and much less noticeable than the often highly coloured bracts which surround them.

Euphorbias belong to the large Plant Family, Euphorbiaceae, with more than 300 genera and over 5000 species. The family has a worldwide distribution but is mainly tropical. Some genera are concentrated in sub-tropical and temperate regions, however, and Euphorbia species occur naturally in southern USA, the Mediterranean region, Middle East and South Africa.

About 58 genera and over 200 species of the Euphorbiaceae occur in Australia including 30 to 40 species in the genus Euphorbia - at least 10 Euphorbia species are naturalised in Australia. In Victoria, 10 species are listed of which only 3 are of natural occurrence - the other 7 are naturalised aliens!

Several Euphorbias grow as weeds in Australia. Some are very widespread, for example Petty Spurge (*Euphorbia peplus*), a very common garden weed with distinctive milky sap, and Sea Spurge (*Euphorbia paralias*) which has spread very rapidly around Victoria's coastline since the 1970s. *Euphorbia drummondii* is one of our 3 naturally occurring species in Victoria which also manages to grow as a nuisance 'weed' in plant nurseries, where it often colonises pot plants and bare soil.



Sea Spurge *Euphorbia paralias*



Crown of Thorns *Euphorbia milii* - Madagascar

Euphorbias cont'd

In our gardening, we became interested in a few of the succulent Euphorbias, many of which resemble cacti in some respects. They are also drought tolerant and easy to care for and to propagate. Ours are some of the smaller species. Tree-size Euphorbias occur though and we saw these growing naturally in Madagascar - very impressive but too large for the small garden! We also saw the Crown of Thorns, *Euphorbia milii*, growing in Madagascar in very harsh conditions - attractive but too prickly for us.

The sharply spiny Euphorbias give plenty of advance notice but the real hazards of the softer, leafy species are concealed until you cut into a stem or leaf. You need to avoid contact, especially with your eyes and mouth, with the milky sap which bleeds out, because it is very toxic and can cause intense irritation and pain, even temporary blindness - ask Judy!



Medusa *Euphorbia flanaganii*



The Brain *Euphorbia flanaganii* f. *cristata*



Coastal Euphorbias - Nelson Victoria

From the Archives - Richard Pope

Miner and Diarist who arrived in Australia 1868.

Research - Judy Milner, Secretary FBGG

Richard Pope kept diaries of his wandering life as a miner, first on his own and then with his family.

He was born in Cornwall and entered mines at St Just in Cornwall. On reaching adulthood, he ignored his father's strictures and sailed for the United States where he worked as a miner in Virginia, Michigan and Illinois.

Returning to Cornwall he married and leaving his young bride Mary Anne behind he again sailed for the US.

On his return he settled down to domestic life working with his father in Ireland.

When his father died in 1867, the wanderlust struck him again and with a family of six children he set out for Ballarat in 1868.



Richard Pope with his daughter Sarah Jane (circa 1865)

After a year working in the deep leads of the Ballarat district, he settled in Bendigo during the boom of 1871 working at several mine sites.

By the time he arrived in Victorian Goldfields he had a wife and growing children to support but he was ever restless. He worked in Bendigo until 1886, when he moved to the Barrier Ranges, with two of his unmarried children, where most of his work was on minor lodes just outside of Broken Hill.

*[Information sourced from Charles Fabey presentation
Launceston Historical Society 2008 Papers and Proceedings
Ref: Diary of Richard Pope, Australian Manuscripts Collection, Ms. 11918,
State Library of Victoria.]*

We are lucky enough for him to have visited and described the Bendigo Botanic Gardens at White Hills while he was here. His diary description of flower beds gay with flowers, ornamental lakes with waterfowl, aviaries of birds and an amusing pair of monkeys all help to bring the gardens of the 1870's to life.

What a welcome sight this oasis must have been in contrast to all the devastation caused by 'the diggings'.



By the Lagoon 1898

A Visitor to the Gardens in 1875

Excerpt from 'The Diaries of Richard Pope' - in his own words.

Monday 27th Dec 1875. Boxing Day. (sic) A second shower of rain early this morning and the weather continual cloudy and threatening. About 1 o'clock pm took 3 of the children and started off for the Botanical gardens White Hills found it a long and somewhat tiresome walk - on our way we crossed the new railway line which is being made to Eaglehawk and then over the old alluvial diggings of Long Gully to the Sydenham gardens at which there is a fete, admission one shilling Hollow's Band in attendance. This garden is private property and is principally devoted to the growth of fruit.

We had to stop for some time outside the high fence which surrounds it in order to shelter a shower of rain which at one time threatened fair to spoil our walk - however it fortunately soon passed away - the sun shone out bright and pleasant and we again resumed our journey passing the White Hills Cemetery and through the small township which has a quiet deserted aspect - the alluvial diggings which made it a prosperous busy place having been long since deserted except by a few Chinese fossickers. However we passed on as quickly as possible to the object of our long tramp, which was a pleasant surprise to us, it being quite an oasis in the desert.

The contrast which it presents to the naked barren country which we had just passed through and was a very striking one. Grand old willows overhang small lakes or ornamental sheets of water in which rare waterfowl of different kinds seemed quite at home prominent amongst them being the black and white swan.

The flower garden is artistically laid out and is still gay with Verbenas, Petunias, Roses and a great variety of flowering plants and shrubs. Vines are grown on trellises forming

shady avenues of considerable length bunches of grapes hanging in profusion but too sour at present to tempt the palate.

There is also a small aviary which contains some nine cockatoos, Parrots, doves, Canarys (sic), Mopokes and a large fierce looking Eaglehawk. In a cage near these are a pair of monkeys whose antics are very amusing and in a large gum tree apparently asleep two native bears, whilst a couple of deer are quietly grazing in a small enclosed paddock this makes the sum total of the zoo - the grounds are pretty well occupied by groups of holiday folks engaged in various ways but enjoyment seemed to be the order of the day. We spent a very pleasant two or three hours amongst the flowers and returned home pretty well tired but not at all regretting our visit to White Hills.

January 1876 Saturday 1 A holiday, and the weather very pleasant, just the right thing for a picnic. We had been so much charmed with the gardens that in the afternoon we again went to the White Hills where we had a very pleasant time returning home in the cool of the evening. "



BOTANICAL GARDENS, WHITE HILLS

Onion Orchid - Garden For The Future

Anne Bridley, FBBG President - An unexpected find during Growing Friends activity.

I was weeding some Flax-lilies (Dianella) in the GFTF last spring when to my surprise I found an Onion Orchid (Microtis).

These orchids have a single stem lined with delicate small green flowers. The local species is naturally found in forests around Bendigo. This one probably came from a seed in soil imported with the Flax-lilies.

Any orchids near the Bendigo Creek here are long gone, so it was wonderful to see it. The more common species readily colonize disturbed areas, and can survive in grassland after other native orchids have disappeared.

Some Onion Orchids are self pollinating, some can produce an embryo without fertilization and others are pollinated by insects.

When I checked the stem again in late summer, the seed pods had dried out. I will be looking for the narrow onion like leaf next spring just in case some of the flowers produced viable seed.



Onion Orchid amongst the Dianellas



Flower spike



Seed pods - April 2019



Anne amongst the Dianellas

Gallery Guides visit the gardens

by Judy Miner

More than 250 volunteer art gallery guides from across Australia met in Bendigo during the week 26th-29th March for their 2019 AAGGO conference.

The Association of Australian Gallery Guiding Organisations conference brings together volunteer art gallery guides every two years for a four-day event featuring presentations from artists, curators and art experts.

As part of their activities a group visited Rosalind Park on the Tuesday and a bus load came to the Bendigo Botanic Gardens for a guided tour and afternoon tea on the Friday.

Members of the Friends and BBG Team Leader Kirstie Paterson took groups on these guided walks.

The group were very interested participants. They enjoyed their visits and especially appreciated the afternoon tea provided by our FBBG members on the Friday.



What's On -

The Friends' Monthly Committee Meetings - all members welcome.

Held at Bendigo Botanic Gardens Samuel Gadd Centre - 9.30am on 3rd Tuesday of the month (except January).
Office bearers are elected for two year terms and the Annual General Meeting is held in August.

Growing Friends

Growing Friends meet at the FBBG nursery (behind the Samuel Gadd Centre) each Tuesday from 9.30am - 11.30am. Activities include propagating plants for the gardens, and for sale, maintaining the plant nursery, as well as assisting the BBG staff in the gardens. New members are always welcome.
Plants are available for sale during Growing Friends times and there are two major sales each year - one in Spring and one in Autumn.

Botanical Illustration Group

Meet Saturdays 9:30am - 4.00pm & Wednesdays 9:30am - 12 noon at the BBG Samuel Gadd Centre. New members welcome.

Date	What	Details
Sunday 5th May	Plant Trust Guided Tour - Bendigo Bot. Gardens	Meet SGC 10.30am
Saturday 11th May	FBBG Autumn Plant sale	Friends Nursery at rear of Samuel Gadd Centre. 9am-2pm Enter via Napoleon Cres.
Tuesday 21st May	FBBG Committee Meeting	Samuel Gadd Centre BBG, 9.30 - 10.30am
Wednesday 22nd May	FBBG Excursion (including a guided tour) to Royal Melbourne Botanic Gardens.	8.45am train from Bendigo then tram to RMBG. Numbers required - ring Annie on 5442 1625
Sunday 26th May	BGANZ Botanic Gardens Open day	Bendigo Bot. Gardens - Guided walks, Illustrators etc 10am - 2pm
Tuesday 18th June	FBBG Committee Meeting	Samuel Gadd Centre BBG. 9.30am - 10.30am
Tuesday 16th July	FBBG Committee Meeting	Samuel Gadd Centre BBG. 9.30am - 10.30am
Tuesday 27th August	FBBG AGM, afternoon tea and guest speaker	Samuel Gadd Centre BBG. 2pm AGM + aft. tea followed by speaker at 3pm
Monday 16th - Friday 20th Sept	AAFBG Garden Guides Conference. [two members attending so far]	Kings Park, Perth. For further information see webpage. https://www.kingsparkguides.org.au
October - Date to be arranged	FBBG Excursion to two private gardens.	Two delightful city gardens not normally open to the public.

Friends of Bendigo Botanic Gardens

Plant Sale

Saturday 11th May 9am-2pm




Bendigo Botanic Gardens
White Hills

Extensive range of plants available including cannas, cottage plants, natives and succulents

Enter via Napoleon Crescent entrance

Plants are surplus City Nursery stock or propagated by the Friends. Money raised is to be spent on developing our city gardens.

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Committee Members: Jane Cleary, Lyn Hamilton, Jan Orr
Kevin Shanahan and Eric Wilkinson.

Newsletter Committee: Delene Commerford, Judy Milner, Jan Orr,

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