

# Jubaea



Friends of Geelong Botanic Gardens Inc Newsletter

Volume 11

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FRIENDS OF  
GEELONG  
BOTANIC  
GARDENS



## Food Fabulous Food...

### ... gardening for health, happiness and history

Historic Botanic Gardens are places of gradual evolution. Rare species and mature trees too large for suburban environments form the Garden's structure and frame the spaces. These same trees offer stillness, they change slowly and their memory spans generations. The area between the trees, the inter-spaces and understorey, are the dynamic areas that offer an opportunity for experimentation and seasonal change.

A winter visit to the Geelong Botanic Gardens will reveal an exciting new horticultural display that has been planted in the 19th Century Garden over part of the original Bunce Nursery. Director Annette Zealley has identified the Central Bed as the 'inter-space' at the GBG and an ideal place for changing displays. The area offers good light, aligns with the central axis and is designed to catch the eye of every visitor to our Gardens. This same area is the footprint of the original GBG nursery and was used in the Garden's earliest days as a series of 'test' beds for acclimatisation of new species to Victoria. Working at this

location replicates the historic horticultural practice established during the Gardens very earliest days by Daniel Bunce.

During late February and early March it was time for change and staff began removing the indigenous dry creek bed, vegetable patch and the colonial stockade that had been in place over the past two years. The newly planted Central Bed is an historic statement and offers a journey through a different time in horticultural practice with direct references to our own Garden.

The flag alignment was once found in an adjoining garden, north of the current location. Its purpose was to provide a colourful display of popular bedding annuals, changing with each season. GBG Staff who have a long association with the Gardens hold a clear memory of selecting plants and setting out the original flag bed. This horticultural principle required skill and was a necessary part of their training and everyday work. Selecting and raising seedlings, hardening off, then planting to exact geometry, tending the plants to maturity, all the while planning the next cycle. Younger staff had no knowledge of this 'historic' practice. Establishment of the new bed has offered an opportunity to teach a range of traditional horticultural principles, ensuring these methods are not lost to time.

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Species selected for the current Flag Bed also have an historic reference and are a combination of food plants and traditional 'bedding' species. This reinterpretation of the vegetable garden offers a different way of presenting food plants in the Garden and may inspire many of our visitors to return home and plant a decorative, but useful pottager. The garden is opportunistic and takes advantage of a rare window in time, the cooler weather and higher rainfall of El Nina is the perfect time to display this type of planting. Like Bunce, Annette Zealley and the staff are using traditional techniques but are also experimenting with species to present a 'non-traditional' bedding display.

However a question remains...

*'What is the history of the Flag Bed?'*...

Initially it was thought to have been planted for Queen Elizabeth II's visit in 1954, however this does not appear to be the case. Could it have been the Coronation? No information

has yet been found to identify the year or purpose of the planting. Can you help? The Friends are seeking old photographs or information about the Flag Bed and other areas of the Geelong Botanic Garden.

Maybe you have an album with an early image, or your friend or relative can remember the display from past days. Wedding photographs and family picnics will show your mother or aunt dressed in their finery but the background could reveal hidden secrets of garden displays and plantings. We are interested in any information that will help us fill the gaps. If you think you might have a 'Gem' please send it to the Friends Office, copies will be made and originals returned to you for safekeeping.

Establishment of the Flag Bed was assisted through funding from the Friends and new seating provided to the Gardens from the Friends Gift Fund.

**Helena Buxton**

**President - Friends Geelong Botanic Gardens**



## Notice of Annual General Meeting

The Friends Geelong Botanic Gardens invite Members to the AGM

**When:** Monday 29th August 7.15pm     **Where:** GBG Meeting Room

Note: Prior to the AGM an Illustrated talk "Food Security and Green Procurement" will be presented by Tina Preferment between 6 – 7 pm

Nominations for all positions to the Committee of Management are welcome. Annual reports will be available to Members from August 22nd. Please forward enquiries to the Friends Office 5222 6053.



# WINTER PLANT SALE

**10AM-4PM Saturday 30th and Sunday 31st July 2011**

Friends of Geelong Botanic Gardens | Phone: (03) 5222 6053 | Email: [friendsgbg@sunet.com.au](mailto:friendsgbg@sunet.com.au) | [www.friendsgbg.com](http://www.friendsgbg.com)





# From the President

## *Changing Times for the Friends*

The Friends Teahouse is a special place to relax, meet friends and family and enjoy the Gardens. Over the past 18 years the visiting public have been continually delighted with the friendly smiles and personal service offered by our staff and volunteers. From a simple kitchen inside a modest building the Friends have offered countless Devonshire teas, slices of cake, harvest pies and pots of 'French Press' coffee.

Times have changed since the Teahouse first opened its doors. The delivery of a service 7 days a week to the visiting public is a large burden for a small voluntary organisation. Added to this are a set of ever changing regulations and requirements that determine how food is prepared and served to the public. Our current manager Jan Perry has been very creative in responding to these changes. Without the benefit of a commercial kitchen Jan and her team regularly adapt a limited menu to the wants and desires of the Garden's visitors.

In the 18 years since its launch the public's expectation of food service and delivery has grown. Now visitors regularly ask our volunteers for 'espresso' coffee and are disappointed when we cannot deliver. The original offering of home-baked scones, cakes and biscuits is no longer possible because all food sold at the Teahouse must be prepared in a commercial kitchen. These are significant changes.

Since the development of the 21st Century Garden there have been discussions about the role of the Teahouse as a café and its potential as a restaurant. Discussion has also included the role of a volunteer organisation in its management.

Following lengthy consideration, the Friends Committee of Management has decided that the Teahouse should be handed back to the City of Greater Geelong. We do not stand alone in making these difficult decisions. Many larger organisations working with volunteers are also facing similar dilemmas around the preparation and delivery of food to the community.

While this news will sadden many people it is also a message filled with opportunity.

A new business will have the capacity to invest in the Teahouse in ways that have not been possible for our voluntary organisation. We are hopeful that a new business will also bring a new audience to our Gardens. It is without doubt that the business that takes over the role of the Teahouse in the near future will have the financial capacity to adapt the building and will certainly offer the frequently requested 'espresso coffee'.

The Friends Teahouse has offered an extraordinary number of volunteer hours to the Gardens over the past 18 years. Friendship has been the cornerstone of the team. At the heart of the Teahouse is the very special service offered by our volunteers. Here we can find the true 'heart' of the Gardens.

Some have expressed fear that with the appointment of a new Teahouse provider this friendly service might be lost. However the Friends have built a strong bond with our regular visitors. This 'spirit of good will' is infectious and is sure to influence the new business that inhabits the precinct.



Over the coming 6 months the City of Greater Geelong will advertise for 'Expressions of Interest', this will be a formal process managed by the City. The Friends presence will remain with opportunities for promotion of our activities and marketing of branded items such as aprons, tea-towels and Botanic Art cards. The Teahouse is an important service at the Gardens and will continue to be managed by the Friends until a suitable operator can be identified. It is anticipated that the change will take up to 6 months to implement, however this may be longer. Our current manager, Jan Perry, will retire by 30th June 2012. The Friends are hopeful that the change in Teahouse management will have been successfully implemented by this date.

A celebration will be held to herald the change – an 18th Birthday. It is hoped that this coming of age for the Teahouse will also launch the new business. An 18th Birthday Party will offer an opportunity to say thank you to the many, many volunteers and staff that have kept the Teahouse running over such a long time. A calculation of volunteer hours is daunting. In one year a conservative estimate is 3,640 hours. Over 18 years this amounts to 65,520 hours of contribution and this does not include paid staff hours. How many quiet souls, busloads of people and happy families have sat on those chairs seeking the peace offered by the Gardens? Future editions of *Jubaea* will inform the FGBG membership of progress and the date of celebration. The City will join the Friends in marking the occasion.

The change at the Teahouse is a stepping-stone for both the Friends and GBG Management. In the foreseeable future the Geelong Botanic Gardens will see the development of a new Visitor Precinct. This interim change offers the Friends an opportunity to redefine our visitor services and place added focus on Guiding, Growing and Education. The future 'friendly face' at the GBG may very well be one of a Guiding Friend leading a Discovery Walk, or a Growing Friend at the Nursery. What is certain is that the Friends will continue to tell the story of the Geelong Botanic Gardens long into the future.

### *A Special Note to Members*

The Friends office is changing hours  
10am to 3pm  
For Enquiries and General Business

# A Perfect Place for a Picnic

*The people of Geelong have always considered the Geelong Botanical Gardens to be the perfect place for a picnic. In the beginning, Eastern Park was laid out with paths and carriageways, planted with hardy plants and referred to as the Botanical Gardens. The area that we now call the 19th Century Gardens was called The Nursery.*



*The Picnic Corner, the Botanical Gardens, Geelong. Postcard from about 1910*

Even before Daniel Bunce arrived on the scene, the Botanic Reserve was seen as the perfect place for civic celebration. The fall of Sebastopol in December 1855 was celebrated in fine style with a public holiday. Arrangements were made for a grand parade from Market Square to the Botanic Reserve where dancing, football, cricket, foot racing, and archery were held. Refreshment booths were erected, and in the evening they lit an immense bonfire for which the people of Geelong had been urged to contribute firewood and tar barrels.

The arrival of Prince Alfred, Duke of Edinburgh in 1867 sent the colonies into a whirl of festivities. Each town set out to outdo its neighbours in the magnificence of its celebrations. The Prince had less than 24 hours in Geelong, but there were civic receptions, a parade through the town and a ball. The following day, the Prince started the Geelong Regatta before leaving for the Western Districts. The ordinary people were not forgotten in the celebrations; a Free Banquet was provided for all-comers in the Botanical Gardens. Those with any sense could have foretold that this was not going to turn out well, especially after the debarkel of Free Banquet Melbourne. People started to arrive at 9am, although food was not expected to be served until 2 pm. Children were entertained with supplies of balls and skipping ropes and volunteers gamely supplied 5-6,000 people with free meat and bread and plum pudding. What really brought things unstuck was the supply of *five hog's heads of ale, and four quarter-casks and one hogshead of red and white colonial wine*. By 3 pm, most of the food had gone, but there was still

a considerable quantity of beer and wine – and a significant number of the crowd considerably the worse for wear. The sole committee member brave enough to attend resorted to pouring the remaining drink on the ground in order to prevent those who had imbibed too freely from obtaining any more. Not surprisingly, a riot broke out, but happily the Gardens were not damaged.

After the Free Banquet, open-air picnicking assumed a more genteel complexion. In 1868, a grand Temperance Festival was held in the Botanic Gardens where some 3 -4,000 people sat down to tea in 2 vast marquees. However, there was no report of this gathering getting out of hand!

The vast majority of picnic parties in the gardens, then as now, were more modest affairs, though not entirely without incident. An “emu-sing event” was reported in 1870 when a young man attending the Christian Doctorine Societies



*Picnicking in 2011*





*The Hunter family's picnic at the Eastern Gardens 1902 Source: Museum Victoria*

picnic took a quiet stroll with his book and was accosted by one of Bunce's "tame" emus. Thinking the book was something to eat; the emu chased the young man up a tree and kept patrol around it until he was rescued by his friends.

Many events have taken place in the area around today's picnic shelter. By 1875 the gardens had become so popular with picnic groups that an octagonal picnic pavilion in the shape of a large, closed in doughnut was erected on the hillside opposite today's PlaySpace. The area around the pavilion featured in postcards of the era as the "picnic place".

Sporting activities were an integral part of large picnics with the newspapers of the day frequently reporting race results in considerable detail. What was not so often reported is just what the picnickers were eating. The Free Banquet had meat of various kinds, bread and plum pudding as well as beer and wine, and they drank tea at the Temperance Festival – but what of the provisions provided to the children of the Sunday Schools and orphanages? Reports of this food are harder to find, but the children of the Orphan School in 1861 were

*liberally supplied with buns, cakes, gingerbeer, &c.*

By the mid-twentieth century, more formal events were happening inside what we now call the Botanic Gardens with it being a favoured site for Mayoral Gardens Parties and more recently as a venue for the Longest Lunch. Music in the Gardens now provides an opportunity in February for alfresco dining while enjoying our annual summer concerts. A peek into the picnic baskets reveals everything from a bag of chips through cheese and crackers to a shared spread that would make the picnickers of 1910 proud.

## Rock Buns

Beat 2 eggs with 1 cup of sugar. Add ½ pound melted margarine, 3 cups of self raising and 1 cup of currants. Gradually add up to 1 cup of milk to produce batter of a cake-like consistency.

Let stand 10 minutes, before spooning onto a baking tray.

Bake 400 F for 10-12 minutes

## Ginger Beer Recipes from the Millhouse Family

To start your ginger beer plant:

- 2 teaspoons ground ginger
- 1 cup luke-warm water
- 1/2 teaspoon of dried yeast

- 1 tablespoon sugar
- 6 sultanas

On each of the next 6 days, feed your plant with 1 teaspoon of ginger and 1 tablespoon of sugar

On the 7th day, divide your ginger beer plant in half. One you can use to make ginger beer, the other half is topped up with 1 cup of water and fed as above.

Make up the ginger beer by dissolving 4 small cups of sugar in 1 pint of boiling water. Add the remaining half of the "ginger beer plant" and the juice of 2-3 lemons. Strain through muslin, then put equal part in 6 bottles, add a sultana to each and top up with water.

Attach tops and store 5-14 days

## Recipes

# Director's Report

## Invisible Achievements

Behind what is visible to the visitors to the Geelong Botanic Garden is the powerhouse of energy and expertise of the horticultural team. The team which cares for the garden on behalf of the community is passionate about plants and works hard to maintain the garden to a high standard. Our team of horticulturists, gardeners and apprentices all contribute to making the garden a special place. Many visitors interact with our team and leave richer for having their questions answered, their interest in plants stimulated, their memories heard and experiences in the garden shared.

The tools of the Horticulturist are those which you would expect from your own gardening experience, and many which reflect changing technology. Hand written records are being transitioned to the plant database which forms the ongoing reference for the extensive plant collection housed in the garden. Accurate records are being developed to help us to manage and maintain the collection through all stages of a plants life- from the seed store to advanced trees. The information contained in the plant database can provide a wealth of information to our horticulturists for collection management. For future generations the records will show what has grown in the Botanic Garden give a historic perspective of the collection and the role the garden has played in influencing the landscape of Geelong.

Perhaps surprising to some traditionalists technology is a practical horticultural tool and improves our ability

to deliver a high standard of plant maintenance. The development of an irrigation plan for the garden will see welcome improvements in our capacity to deliver water to our plant collection. Our objective is to maintain the health and vigor of our plants. Our current irrigation system requires a significant improvement to achieve this objective. Although we operate on low water use principles we hold a collection of 'exotic' plants which have high water demands. Without an irrigation system the Botanic Garden's collections in the heritage garden would not have survived the recent drought conditions. The system currently being designed will have capacity to expand in the future as the garden develops.

Another invisible task is the depth of planning which goes into management of the plant collections. Collections plans are a defining factor that distinguishes a well presented public garden from a Botanic Garden. Establishing collection themes which focus our efforts on development of existing or emerging collections facilitates our role in conservation of plant material. Improvements to the presentation of the *Salvia* collection over the past 18 months has resulted in the geographic origins of the species groups being clear and able to be interpreted by our team and the Friends guides. These planned changes have resulted in an area of garden being redeveloped to fit seamlessly into the existing style while achieving our role as one of the best regional Botanic Gardens in Australia.

**Annette Zealley**  
**Director, Geelong Botanic Garden**

***Urgently seeking  
donations of  
CLEAN used pots  
Black only***

***15 cm or 6 inch***

***Deliver to the Friends  
Nursery rear GBG***



## A Word of Thanks to our City

The Friends of Geelong Botanic Gardens would like to extend a special thank you to the City of Greater Geelong and Cr. Andy Richards for their support during the 2010 – 2011 financial year.

A special Councillor grant of \$8,500 has assisted the Friends in delivering the following activities:

- ❁ Mad Hatters Tea Party – story telling and activities for Pre school children
- ❁ Open Garden @ GBG – a family day with free entertainment Promotion of Discovery walks and Music in The Gardens
- ❁ Support for Professional Development for FGBG Guides attending the Biannual Guides Conference in Brisbane (Conference fees only).

The Friends of the Geelong Botanic Gardens  
are now on

**facebook**

Find us as "Friends of the Geelong Botanic Gardens" and click "like" to keep up with what is happening at the GBG, to keep informed about events and to see our photos.



For all FGBG Members who have leapt into the new era and are using technology to learn about our world... you can also find the Friends of Geelong Botanic Gardens on Facebook. This is a new way of communicating with a younger generation, encouraging them to visit the GBG and get them involved in FGBG activities.



# See the Garden in a New Light

*Join a Discovery Walk and hear the stories of the GBG*



*Each month the Guides offer a themed afternoon walk that has been carefully researched to tell a story about our Garden or the people and plants that are part of its history.*

*Visit the Teahouse for a warming hot chocolate then join the walk at 2pm*

*Meet at the GBG entry steps in the 21st Century Garden.*



## Winter Walks

Sugar and Spice and all Things Nice ~ 17th July

Earth, Energy and Edibles ~ 14th August

Fun Foraging for Food ~ 18th September

The Friends Guides are also available every  
Wednesday 10.30am and Sunday 2pm.

These weekly walks are well suited to  
individuals and smaller groups





# What's on

## Events, dates for the diary

### July

**What:** **Special Guided Walk – ‘Sugar & Spice and All Things Nice’**

**When:** Wednesday 13th July 2pm AND Sunday 17th July 2pm

**Where:** Meet your Guide at front steps of GBG – Gold Coin Donation

**What:** **Annual Friends Winter Lunch – Join FGBG Patron, Mr Richard Barley**

Each year the Friends host a Winter Lunch and this year we welcome our new Patron, Mr Richard Barley, as our Guest Speaker. Richard has a long association with the RBG Melbourne and most recently was appointed as the CEO of Australia's Open Garden Scheme. Listen to Richard's tale of Australia's most beautiful gardens and join the Friends for a pleasant lunch – wonderful raffle prizes will be won by some lucky people. Guests will be welcomed with a glass of champagne on arrival.

**When:** Monday 25th July 12.30 for 1pm start  
Support the Friends by contributing to one of our big fundraisers for 2011

Cost: Members \$60; Non-members \$75 (drinks not included)

**Where:** Lyndon Grove, corner Surfcoast Highway & Grove Road, Grovedale

**What:** **Friends' Nursery – Winter Plant Sale**

Re-invent your Garden beds, take advantage of winter rains and get plants established. So come along, seek some expert advice from a Growing Friend and choose that special plant for your own garden.

**When:** Saturday – Sunday 30th – 31st July 10am – 4pm daily

**Where:** The Growing Friends Nursery, rear of GBG, vehicle entry via Nursery Gate, follow the red flags to the Nursery

### August

**What:** **Special Guided Walk ‘Earth, Energy and Edibles: Sustainable food and gardening’**

How can we help the environment through our gardening? Join your FGBG Guide to look at species and grouping for plant survival in a changing climate. Then proceed to the vegetables and herbs to discuss techniques and plant selection for growing our own food.

**When:** Sunday 14th August 2pm

**Where:** Meet your Guide at front steps of GBG – Gold Coin Donation

**What:** **Winter Welcome to New Members – enjoy a morning tea with new members and Friends**

**When:** Wednesday 17th August 10.30am – 12 noon

**Where:** GBG Meeting Room – RSVP Friends office 5222 6053 or Email: friendsgbg@sunet.com.au

**What:** **Illustrated Talk – ‘Food Security and Green Procurement’**

Presented by Tina Preferment, Barwon Waste Management Resource Centre. Learn about the challenge to food security at a global and local level. What does it mean for our future?

**When:** Monday 29th August 6 – 7pm.

**Where:** GBG Meeting Room – Gold Coin Donation

**What:** **The Friends Annual General Meeting**

**When:** Monday 29th August 7.15pm

**Where:** GBG Meeting Room

### September

**What:** **Special Guided Walk – ‘Fun Foraging for Food’**

An exploration of bush food including plants used by the aboriginal people as well as wild food from around the world.

**When:** Sunday 18th September 2pm

**Where:** Meet your Guide at front steps of GBG – Gold Coin Donation

### October

**What:** **‘Inspired by Nature’ – The Friends Biennial Botanic Art Exhibition**

An exhibition of selected works from the Geelong School of Botanic Art. View the work of our talented artists; featuring studies of plant material from the Geelong Botanic Gardens with a special focus on the Gardens historic trees. Framed and unframed works are available for purchase.

**When:** 19th – 30th October

**Where:** Gordon Gallery, Fenwick Street, Geelong

### Items for your diary

**Full details in the Spring Edition of Jubaea**

Spring Plant Sale – 29th & 30th October

High Tea in Spring – Sunday 30th October

Spring Garden Tour to Daylesford – 31st October



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