

Jubaea



Friends of Geelong Botanic Gardens Inc Newsletter

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FRIENDS OF
GEELONG
BOTANIC
GARDENS



Guiding at Geelong Botanic Gardens

History

At the Friends' inaugural meeting in 1985 it was decided that the training of a group of voluntary guides was to be the first priority: if people could be encouraged to visit the Geelong Botanic Gardens and understand its remarkable history it would be greatly valued by the community.

Jenny Happell and Jayne Salmon had recently completed voluntary guide training at the Royal Melbourne Botanic Gardens: Jenny became guide leader and organised a rigorous guide-training program. At the end of 1986 fourteen trainee voluntary guides had all written their assignments and passed their test walks. The winter had been spent learning about the historical significance of the Gardens, the relevance of Provincial and other Botanic Gardens and how one should take a walk. Walks were offered to the public each Wednesday morning.

With support and interest from the Friends, the Guides and the Gardens grew. Sunday afternoon walks were introduced to attract more visitors, and the guides offered themed walks on Plant Evolution and Gardens

Heritage. Special walks featuring Rare and Endangered Plants in the Geelong Botanic Gardens were offered to complement an Exhibition at the Geelong Art Gallery. When the FGBG Education program was launched, the guides assisted the teachers using the program. A new Significant Tree brochure was produced, with expert help from Netta Schefferle.

The first National Conference of Volunteer Guides in Botanic Gardens was held in Brisbane in 1997. Conferences are now held bi-annually and representatives from our Guide group always attend. (This year we will be travelling to Sydney for the week-long conference).

With the announcement that the City of Greater Geelong was to invest \$2.3 million in a new front entrance to link the Gardens to the Waterfront and City, the level of activity at the GBG rose dramatically. Good planning and communication was the essence of the great change that was to take place and voluntary guides played an integral role in communication with the public. The guides explained the new contemporary design and the philosophy behind the choice of plants adapted to low water use. All guides enjoyed the

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intensive training and introduction to a wide range of Australian and exotic plants. The 21st Century Garden was opened by Governor John Landy in September 2002, with great fanfare. Visitors flocked to the Gardens and the request for guided walks rose significantly. Rosemary Turner coordinated the Guide Program and Training over this busy period. Rosemary also initiated a new outreach program for residents in Aged Care facilities.

Over time, many-themed guided walks have been added to the Visitor Program as well as walks to accompany gallery exhibitions. Guides work with staff to support GBG planting themes and to produce monthly “Garden Highlights” sheets and other interpretive material. A list of current Discovery Walks is available on the FGBG website, www.friendsgbg.org.au

Liz Bennetto is the present coordinator of the Guides. Six new guides have almost completed their training, and will be warmly welcomed by our experienced guides. Jayne Salmon has been a voluntary guide at the Gardens for thirty years; it would be hard to calculate how many visitors have enjoyed a walk with her! George Jones, another ‘original’, only retired from guiding when he turned 90. Advice is still sought from retired guides – like George, Netta Schefferle, Bridget Gubbins, Jenny Possingham and Silvana Benacchio.

The Voluntary Guides are a diverse, knowledgeable and vibrant group eager to share their stories with each other and the public. Good communication and interpretation skills have helped the community understand and appreciate Geelong Botanic Gardens.

Jayne Salmon

The experience of guiding

No matter how often, in what season, or over how many years we take walks through gardens, we can still discover a flower, a shrub, some berries, cones or pods that we had not noticed or even seen before. This has become particularly so since the gardens’ new watering system was installed: it’s quite exciting and part of the pleasure of guiding at the GBG.

Guides endeavor to interpret the gardens for visitors and provide for any particular visitor interests, be it for a large group, or one or two. We quite often learn something botanical from the visitors as well!

While a guides training program is essential, no guide can ever know everything. Most guides have their particular passions, whether exotics, the weird and wonderful, local indigenous or Australian plants, succulents, or the marvelous heritage trees, for which Geelong Botanic Gardens is highly regarded.

Guiding in the gardens is a varied experience requiring some flexibility. Sometimes there are no walkers, allowing us time to explore, or engage with other visitors. A group of fifteen starters might finish with only ten, as people wander off to explore on their own; alternatively you may find you have picked up another four along the way. Bucketing rain can require a rapid retreat along the side paths in the trees or a run to the Tea House.

Then there is the plant we had intended to show the group— but find it’s gone!

Being on the right path at the weekend to avoid confronting an advancing bride requires extra flexibility during the wedding season.

There are also many pleasures and surprises! One quiet Sunday morning the guide came across some people enjoying exercises— minus clothes! Guide and frolickers were both rather surprised. The guide politely commented, grinned and retreated.

In all, just being in the garden is a pleasure and meeting the many people from all walks of life and from all over the world adds to that pleasure. Having the opportunity to meet at conferences with guides from across Australasia is a valuable bonus.

Annie McGeachy

We’ve got a Learner’s Permit!

Since February a new contingent of trainee guides has been, well, training. Our aim is to become as confident and knowledgeable as those people supporting and teaching us to showcase our beautiful Botanic Gardens to visitors.

Each Monday morning in February we gathered to complete the bulk of our training program, being inducted into the history, garden design, development of facilities, key people, and the plants in the collection. Training continues with information on botany in the following month. We have been engaged in reading extensively and creating our own historical framework. Many people have shared their knowledge with us, taking us on walks to illustrate their knowledge of the stately trees, the structures, the ponds and new water reticulation system, the 21st Century Garden, the fernery, the curiosity cabinet, the vegetable garden, the perennial and silver borders, the heritage rose garden and the shrubberies. Many of us have also attended the Sunday walks with the public.

This is all fascinating, challenging, enjoyable and rewarding on many levels. We hope that we, too, will keep on growing with our continually changing Gardens.

Jenny Dean

Autumn Tour

Our recent visit to Lambley Nursery was an autumn delight.

David Glenn, horticulturist and owner for 22 years of the historic cottage, garden and nursery at Ascot inspired 35 of our Friends with his words of wisdom and enthusiasm

There were new and better varieties of garden plants and trees to be seen. The drought tolerant low growing blue Ceanothus was one.

The virtue of the ornamental pear in our climate was illustrated by an impressive stand of *Pyrus valentine*

We all appreciated the spectacular group of Chinese elms, *Ulmus parvifolia* that shaded the north side of the cottage. It was explained how important judicious pruning to remove weight in upper branches is, to prevent forking lower down. Trees need regular attention to maintain good shape in the garden.

David extolled the virtue of hardy crab apples in a garden. A group of *Malus* gorgeous were laden with luscious red fruit, one tree had root stock growing through the branches and we were all refreshed by picking and eating the juicy golden delicious apples picked from the tree. In another section of the garden *Malus* golden hornet was laden with rich yellow fruit.

Inside the walled garden of the cottage was a massed planting of white anemones, a sight to behold.

The garden stretches the imagination and opens the eye to the way plants can be used and their suitability to the climate. Frost is something that Lambley has to contend with and plants need to be hardy.



No one could resist the Nursery, where we purchased bulbs, plants, seeds and cards by Chris Canning (David's wife).

Our appreciation and understanding of good gardening was enhanced by our visit to Lambley.

After lunch in Creswick we visited the Melbourne University campus of the School of Ecosystem and Forest Science. This impressive campus was established as a Forestry School in 1910 on a hillside to the east of the town. We enjoyed the self-guided walk amongst early plantings of conifers and other impressive trees.

We were all very aware how dry the country was when we toured a large densely planted country garden near Creswick. The garden displayed a great variety of plants including pelargoniums and salvias. We came away feeling full of admiration for the owner.

Our garden tours are always great outings, the next tour is planned for September 28th when we shall visit wonderful gardens in the Camperdown area.

Jayne Salmon

Jubaea—Correction

In the last edition of Jubaea our lead article—which members report they have enjoyed so much—recorded the illustrations as by 'Photographers unknown'. This is indeed the case. However, the illustration of Geelong Botanic Gardens is by artist Albert Cooke and engraved by Samuel Calvert. It was published in The Illustrated Australian ... newspaper as a 'photographic print' in 1870. Further information is available with the picture hanging in the GBG Meeting Room.



FGBG Volunteer Celebration

The Friends celebrated their regular volunteers at a special morning tea on Wednesday 13th May. A piper welcomed everyone at the main gate and piped the group to the meeting room where a sumptuous morning tea was set out, complete with pearl balloons to celebrate our 30th anniversary year.

Friends Winter Solstice Lunch

The Friends will hold their winter gathering at the attractive refurbished

Jack Rabbit Restaurant at Drysdale on Monday 22nd June at 12.30pm

We are delighted Janet O'Hehir who has a Masters Degree in Urban Horticulture has accepted our invitation to be Guest Speaker.

Janet has been engaged in post graduate research in municipal horticulture and has a particular interest in the value and maintenance of public gardens.

Janet is secretary of the recently established Camperdown Botanic Gardens and Arboretum Trust, a community group with support from local council which aims to restore the Camperdown Gardens to their original glory. Daniel Bunce, our first curator laid out the Camperdown Gardens in 1870 before they were enhanced by the renowned Royal Botanic Gardens Director William Guilfoyle later that century.

We look forward to a wonderful overview of Victoria's Garden Heritage when Janet gives her illustrated talk next month.

Please book your place or table as this will be a very popular event.

Friends \$60 Others \$70

Please contact Friend's Office to make a booking 52 226053.

Biographical Notes



Geoff Davis

Geoff was born and schooled in the western Adelaide suburbs of Grange and Henley Beach. A Commonwealth scholarship then allowed him to enter Adelaide University, driven by the notion that maybe a life-time interest in insects could be 'grown' into a vocation. He graduated in 1974 with a Bachelor of Agricultural Science, majoring in entomology

and plant pathology. An honours in entomology followed in 1975.

Post-university, he joined the South Australian Health Department mosquito monitoring program for two years, mainly identifying adult mosquitoes trapped in the SA riverland. Other part-time work, in the SA Dept of Agriculture, involved sampling alfalfa aphid and sitona weevil populations. In 1978 Geoff moved to Darwin, joining the NT Dept of Health as a medical entomologist. The next nine years were largely spent monitoring larval and adult mosquito activity throughout the NT, with the intent of addressing concerns about mosquito-borne diseases (mainly Ross River virus, Australian Encephalitis virus, dengue, malaria) and the quality of life impacts of biting insects. Other insects, like pharaoh's ants, coffin

flies, biting midges and pubic lice, provided interesting diversions along the way. In 1986 he joined the Victorian Dept of Agriculture to work on the entomological aspects of the Victorian Arbovirus Disease Control Program ('arbovirus' referring to arthropod-borne viruses ie. viruses carried by insects and in the case of Victoria, exclusively mosquitoes).

In 1990 he joined the Commonwealth Dept of Health in Canberra to manage the mosquito-borne disease aspects of the National Diseases Control Program. With the cessation of the NDCP shortly after, he moved on to other interesting parts of the Dept (in order, communicable diseases, the National Health and Medical Research Council, environmental health and food safety. He retired in 2007.

The family moved to Geelong at the end of 2007 (great time to be a Cats fan!) to be closer to relatives, the sea and Melbourne.

Under the influence of his mother (and her father in earlier times), and botany studies at Adelaide University, Geoff developed a life-long interest in plants, mainly the native species, but with a growing interest in later years with succulents.

He joined the FGBG (Growing Friends) in 2013, as a way to enjoy plants while achieving something bigger than just improving another urban property, namely, to help make a great regional botanic garden even better. He also contributes to the work of the Friends as a member of the Committee of Management.

Botanical Art News

The Geelong School of Botanical Art has been going for many years and in that time many students have passed through the doors. Interest in botanical art has exploded in recent years. It is today recognised as one of the few areas of modern life since the Renaissance where the humanities and science work in unison, whether it is pure botany, horticulture, or the environmental concerns of habitat, endangerment and ecology. Botanical art is a demanding art form and it takes time to master the technical skills of fine observational drawing and of watercolor. All of this takes up a lot of time in our weekly classes and one consequence is that the important composition skills can often be relegated to second place.

This brings us to a new book published in April, 'The Botanical Art Files – Composition' written by Rita Parkinson and illustrated by both Rita and Dolores Sk-Malloni, our weekday art tutors.

Both Rita and Dolores have taught at Geelong for a number of years and the book has developed out of their teaching program. It takes into account many of the problems that students come across in understanding the important underlying visual principles. This can be a weak point for many students who don't have a previous background in the visual arts.

The book is designed to be a practical informative guide that looks beyond the technical skills. Its focus is entirely on the important aspect composition plays in the success of

a botanical work. Whether the artist is a recent convert to the subject or already an expert this book emphasizes just how important it is for composition to be taken seriously, and to understand and develop these all important visual skills.

The book translates the essential visual skills that all professional illustrators know into the specific problems that botanical subjects present. It covers the underlying principles that all great works of art are structured around and translate them into an easy to understand working method for botanical artists to internalize and incorporate into their practice. The book is illustrated with a great variety of illustrations completed by both Rita and Dolores over a number of years for various exhibitions and commissions and chosen here to specifically to illustrate the principles examined in the text.

For more information Illustrita1@gmail.com

THE BOTANICAL ART FILES
COMPOSITION
THE DESIGN GUIDE FOR BOTANICAL ARTISTS
Rita Parkinson



Tall Trees & Tiny Trees

This winter we are celebrating all things trees! Tall Trees and Tiny Trees is a fantastic opportunity to share our passion for trees. The Geelong Bonsai Club is presenting an exhibition of 'Tiny Trees' in the Curiosity Cabinet. Themed displays will inspire an added challenge of spotting which of the tiny trees are the same as our tall trees in the garden.

The talented Botanic Art School artists are partnering with the club for a weekend pop up gallery in July. Beautiful paintings of our tree collection will be showcased with Bonsai. The combination of art and nature is a must see, as is the Discovery walk with the knowledgeable Guides which highlights our wonderful tree collection.

Our replanting of the arboretum, in Eastern Park, has continued this year. The value of the historic landscape and the botanical collection of Eastern Park and the Botanic Gardens is recognised by inclusion on the Victorian Heritage Register. Avenues which defined the layout of historic paths and carriageways, tree circle plantings, the Pinetum and individual tree specimens are listed as significant.

Our focus is on reinstating the heritage avenues and specimen plantings throughout the park. You may have noticed the

removal of five Sugar Gums along Ryrie St. These trees were removed due to risk assessments. The reinstatement of the avenues is a planned process and includes Heritage Victoria approvals. Over the past few years we have planted over 1000 trees into the park and these young plantings give us much hope for the future.

The Ryrie Street avenue has just been planted with Sugar Gums *Eucalyptus claddocalyx* and Kauri Agathis *robusta* which will form a significant double avenue announcing the value of Eastern Park to all who drive past. Entering the park onto Holt Road visitors to the park will see new plantings of *Cupressus sempervirens* forming a focal point. As you travel along the road new plantings of *Pinus halepensis* will create a shady avenue inviting visitors to explore further into the park. Our commitment to new plantings ensures that in another 150 years Eastern Park will continue to be one of the most influential landscapes of its time.

We were disappointed to have a significant vandalism event in the garden which resulted in damage to plants and artwork. What was wonderful was the show of community support for the gardens and our horticulture team. We encourage all of you to put your positive energy towards engaging others in your passion for the Botanic Garden by bringing new people to visit who can support our care for the garden into the future. Bring a child for our next school holiday program, have a cuppa at the teahouse, come to an event and walk the arboretum..... so many opportunities await you.

This winter immerse yourself in all things Tall Trees & Tiny Trees!

Annette Zealley

Director Geelong Botanic Gardens





Angiopteris evecta

In 2013 Tess Mahar received a letter from Beverly Allen, President of the Florilegium Society at the Royal Botanic Gardens in Sydney. Beverly wrote, “It was a pleasure to see your work exhibited in

the recent ‘Botanica’ exhibition in Sydney as well as in Melbourne previously. The paintings you exhibited were very impressive and so, on behalf of the committee, I am writing to introduce you to our Florilegium project and to invite you to consider joining as an artist member.”



Tess Mahar

Tess accepted this invitation and was duly sent a list of plants from which to choose a subject to paint. In consultation with Jeff Hecker, from the Geelong Botanic Gardens, she chose the giant fern, *Angiopteris evecta*, and with his help received permission to sit in the hot house to sketch and take notes on the fern. The painting of the fern, along with the work of several other artists, including Deb Chirnside and Rosemary Donnelly, is to be exhibited in a major exhibition to celebrate the Bicentenary Year of the Sydney Royal Botanic Gardens at the Museum of Sydney in 2016.

Tess found this to be a wonderful experience and she is indebted to the GBG Director, Annette Zealley, Phil Mulroyan, Julie Duffield, Jeff Hecker and everyone who helped her with this project.

CALL FOR POTS

Nursery in need of black pots (140 – 150 mm). Donated pots can be dropped off on a Wednesday morning during nursery opening times. Any donations will be greatly appreciated.

MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS 2015-16

Your membership subscription will be posted to your mailing address in early June.

Winter Flowers & Scents



As the colder winter months approach, it is worthwhile noting some plants that give us enjoyment, colour & scent in the garden during this time. The versatile Camellia is one such shrub. They grow best in a north-easterly aspect, preferring part-shade & a sheltered position. They require a well-drained slightly acidic soil enriched with organic matter (e.g. cow manure/ garden compost) and a deep watering once a week during the warmer months. Camellias also make

good pot/tub specimens and are relatively pest and disease free, requiring minimal pruning. The best known species are the early flowering *Camellia sasanqua*, followed by the *Camellia japonica* and the later blooming *Camellia reticulata*. A selection of all of these will reward you with ongoing delight.

Daphnes are a popular winter flowering plant. There are many species and cultivars, but best known is *Daphne odora*, a small shrub with spicy, fragrant white/pink flowers. Like camellias, they like an easterly aspect or part-shade and composted soil. Good drainage is essential as they are susceptible to 'collar rot', if the roots remain wet for too long. Note, that well established daphnes do not like to be transplanted and that cuttings can be struck during Summer.

The Cyclamen is a rewarding indoor/outdoor winter bloomer. Both leaves & flowers arise from a flattened bulb-like growth, which is the main storage organ for the plants growth. They can brighten up all areas of the garden & house with their wide range of colours & patterned leaves and some are beautifully perfumed. After a dormant period over Summer (refrain from watering at this time), cyclamens can be repotted with good quality potting mix and diluted liquid fertiliser will keep the flowering buds appearing.

Lastly, *Michelia doltsopa*, a rewarding smallish specimen tree closely related to the magnolia, bears large creamy white lemon-scented flowers in winter. It requires a frost-free location in humus-rich well drained soil.

Roz Hill



Special FGBG Autumn Activities:

June • July • August 2015

JUNE

DISCOVERY WALK - 'Trees for Timber' **Sunday 14 June, 2.00 pm**

A walk of discovery through the GBG to enjoy those special trees whose timber is highly prized by craftsmen, wood-turners and people who just love the touch and smell of wood in a finished product. Meet your guide at the front gates of the GBG. Gold coin donation.

DISCOVERY TABLE in the Gardens **Sunday 21 June, 1.00 – 3.00 pm**

Meet the Friends' Guides for interesting information and direction to key plants and seasonal change. Copies of the Self-guided Walks and information sheets are available at the Discovery Table and the Teahouse.

WINTER SOLSTICE LUNCHEON with GUEST SPEAKER JANET O'HEHIR **Monday 22 June, 12.00 for 12.30 pm start**

Join us at Jack Rabbit Vineyard on the Bellarine Peninsula to celebrate the Friends' 30 Year Anniversary. Enjoy beautiful panoramic views, a la carte cuisine and cool climate wines and hear captivating speaker Janet O'Hehir presenting 'Camperdown: A Garden on the Brink'. Tickets \$60 members or \$70 non-members. Payments at the FGBG office by Wednesday 17 June.

JULY

FGBG SCHOOL OF BOTANICAL ART POP UP GALLERY WITH GBG TALL TREES, TINY TREES **Saturday 4 and Sunday 5 July**

Be amazed by a display of Bonsai in the Curiosity Cabinet during June- July. Discover our fabulous tree collection and come to the Pop up Gallery at the rear of the Gardens to see the tree portraits by our talented botanic artists.

DISCOVERY WALK - 'PUMPKINS, PEAS OR POLENTA?' **Sunday 12 July, 2.00 pm**

Explore the vegetables in Geelong Botanic Gardens and discuss hints for successful veggie gardening and soup ideas. Delicious soup made from GBG vegetables will be served in the tea house. Meet your guide at the front gates of the GBG. Gold coin donation.

SCHOOL OF BOTANICAL ART – TERM 3 COMMENCES **Monday 13 July**

Classes are available from beginner to advanced levels. Small classes and a friendly fun atmosphere are key features of the school. Plant material from the Gardens forms the focus of study. Contact the FGBG Office to secure your place.

DISCOVERY TABLE in the Gardens **Sunday 19 July, 1.00 – 3.00 pm**

Meet the Friends' Guides for interesting information and direction to key plants and seasonal change. Copies of the Self-guided Walks and information sheets are available at the Discovery Table and the Teahouse.

WINTER WALK IN EASTERN PARK **Saturday 25 July, 1.30 pm**

We invite you to join the Friends for an exhilarating walk in our Heritage listed Botanic Gardens and Eastern Park. New trees have been planted over the past few years to replace old senescent trees that had declined and were past their use by date. We shall be joined on the walk by John Hawker, Heritage Officer, Horticulture, Heritage Victoria.

Meet at the Teahouse at 1.00 pm for a mug of soup prior to commencement of walk at 1.30 pm.

WEEKEND WINTER PLANT SALE **Saturday and Sunday 25 and 26 July, 10.00 am – 4.00 pm**

Featuring a wide selection of Australian plants, colourful perennials, hardy shrubs, pelargoniums and salvias, sourced from the Geelong Botanic Gardens.

The Friends' Nursery and car park is located at the rear of the Gardens.

AUGUST

DISCOVERY WALK - 'HARDY SHRUBS TO ENHANCE YOUR GARDEN' **Sunday 9 August 2.00 pm**

The shrubberies at the GBG have been a feature of the Gardens for over 150 years. Learn more about these plantings with your voluntary Guide. Meet your guide at the front gates of the GBG. Gold coin donation.

DISCOVERY TABLE in the Gardens **Sunday 16 August, 1.00 – 3.00 pm**

Meet the Friends' Guides for interesting information and direction to key plants and seasonal change.

Copies of the Self-guided Walks and information sheets are available at the Discovery Table and the Teahouse.

FGBG ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING AND MEMBERS' FORUM **Monday 31 August, 5.30 for a 6.00 pm start**

The guest speaker will be GBG Director Annette Zealley.

In the GBG meeting room at 5.30 pm for a 6.00 pm start. Parking at the rear of the gardens. Light refreshments provided.

BUS TOUR TO HISTORIC CAMPERDOWN GARDENS - Monday 28 September (Stay tuned for more details soon.)

Submissions for the Jubaea Spring issue are welcome by 1 August 2015

All articles, including high resolution jpg pictures, noting they are for Jubaea can be sent to the editorial committee at info@friendsgbg.org.au

Jubaea is published by the Friends of Geelong Botanic Gardens, Inc. Eastern Park, Geelong. PO Box 235, Geelong 3220.

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