



CAMPERDOWN BOTANIC GARDENS AND ARBORETUM TRUST INC.

Newsletter no 40

Summer 2022–23

A blast from the past

Thanks to Ray Watson of the Camperdown and District Historical Society for sending the photo from 2006 (below right) of Mayor Ruth Gstrein and member of the Lakes and Craters Environment Group Barry Coverdale planting the Wollemi Pine (*Wollemia nobilis*) the group donated for the Botanic Gardens. That was 16 years ago and it's doing well, as you can see in the picture on the right.

A grove of Wollemi Pines would be a good addition to our Arboretum as the redevelopment gets underway.

Below is a picture of the grove of Wollemi Pines that delights visitors at the Tasmanian Arboretum near Devonport. The photograph was taken in October during the International Dendrology Society's members tour of northern Tasmania.





Preparing for summer

Summer is upon us and things will be drying up quickly. Noorat plumber Tom Conheady (above) has been making sure the watering system is in good order.

The watering system in the Botanic Garden was installed in 1991 thanks to a contribution from the Edward Manifold Memorial Trust. Over time it fell into disrepair, but it was renovated and restarted in 2013 when restoration of the Botanic Gardens began.

Working bees

For the past 10 years we have had a working bee on the second Sunday of every month – that's 360 working bees and thousands of hours of weeding, raking, mulching, edging, pruning and planting, and all the other activities that go into rejuvenating a botanic garden and establishing and caring for garden beds and borders.

Working bees will continue on the second Sunday of the month throughout 2023.

Several people have mentioned that they would like to join in but can't make it on Sundays. If you would like to help in the garden but can't make it on working bee days, you are welcome to contact Janet to arrange another time (contact details are at the end of the newsletter). We have work going on in the gardens on most days of the week, so we can easily arrange another time for you to come. There is always work to do and extra hands are welcome.

All volunteers are welcome, but for insurance purposes you must be a member of the CBGA Trust (with a paid-up annual membership fee of \$10). Tools are provided but you will need to bring a hat, gloves and sunscreen.

Arboretum planning

Planning continues for the redevelopment of four hectares of our Arboretum in the north-east of the 25-hectare Botanic Gardens and Arboretum site.

Following the preparation of the concept plan earlier in the year, there will be picnic shelters, paths and seating, and a carpark off Park Road beside the communication towers. A gate will provide access to the public toilets and playground which are located within the section of the Arboretum currently occupied by a caravan park.

Access to the Botanic Garden and the lookout will remain through the entrance at the historic Gardener's Cottage and along the driveway, which was a feature of the original layout by Daniel Bunce and the later plan drawn up by William Guilfoyle.

Arboricultural work will continue on the old trees when the crew from Tree Designs Australia returns early next year. The new trees planted will include a range of interesting, unusual and attractive species likely to thrive in the local conditions. They will include trees indigenous to the local area and other Australian species, as well as exotic species with a variety of colour and form, deciduous and evergreen, flowering and coniferous in line with William Guilfoyle's original design intent.

Landscape architect Dr Jen Dearnaley has been engaged by Council to prepare the plan, which she expects will be available for public comment by February.



Above: Our volunteer gardeners stopped for morning tea at the picnic shelter after the December working bee. From left: Leon Morrissey, Caroline Monteith, Janette Lambell, Helen James, Emma Bell, Linda Jacovou, Janet O'Hehir, Pamela Jellie and Gaynor Bott. Garry Moorfield took the photo.

What's growing? Australian plants

Several Australian species are among the signature plants associated with William Guilfoyle's gardens. The Red Flowering Gum, *Corymbia ficifolia*; Moreton Bay Fig, *Ficus macrophylla*; Spear Lily, *Doryanthes palmeri*, and the beautiful, but less-appreciated nowadays, Sweet Pittosporum, *Pittosporum undulatum*, were among his favourites, and they can all be seen in our garden today.

In his 1911 book, *Australian plants suitable for gardens, parks, timber reserves, etc.*, Guilfoyle aimed to 'arouse increased enthusiasm in regard to the Australian Flora, which, be it said, is the most varied, wonderful, and beautiful in the Vegetable Kingdom ... readily procurable and easily grown [and] are far too often neglected, in the decoration of parks and gardens, in favour of exotic vegetation, which, in the majority of cases, is less hardy, and not nearly as picturesque.'

Below are some of the Australian plants flowering in the garden at the moment. Top left to right: Native Hibiscus, *Alyogyne huegii*; Broadleaf Drumstick, *Isopogon anemonifolius*; Mt Warning Tea Tree, *Leptospermum variabile* and Hop Goodenia, *Goodenia ovata*. Bottom left to right: Spurflower, *Plectranthus parviflorus*; Spear Lily, *Doryanthes palmeri*; Flax Lily, *Dianella caerulea*; and Tussock Grass, *Poa labillardieri*.



New furniture

Picnickers have been enjoying the new furniture at the picnic shelter. The tables are longer (and level!) with easily accessed step-through bench seats and space for wheelchairs at either end. New bins are located in a less conspicuous spot and allow for the separation of rubbish. Three additional bench seats have been placed in the north and eastern areas of the garden where there was no seating previously.

The new furniture is among a range of improvements funded by an \$83,000 grant from the Growing Victoria's Botanic Gardens program in 2019. Although the works were held up by COVID for a couple of years, they are nearing completion now with the re-opening and redevelopment of the Arboretum. The GVBG funding program has been an important investment by the State Government, acknowledging the value of the unique network of beautiful and often historic botanic gardens and arboreta across our State and their value to regional communities and their visitors.



The people you meet

Louise Honman and Rod Duncan (above) dropped by on their way to Warrnambool. Leonie, a heritage architect, was a member of the consultancy team which prepared the Conservation Management Plan for our Botanic Gardens and Arboretum in 2016 and was keen to check on progress.

CBGA Trust committee member Sue Cole (below right) and her friend Rozie Stansmore from Peterborough took a stroll around the garden and admired the Protea flowers in the new pink border along the eastern fence.



What's growing?

Melicytus ramiflorus, Whitey Wood

The heavily scented tiny cream coloured flowers of *Melicytus ramiflorus* emerge directly from the branches (a phenomenon known as ramiflory). The small tree on the eastern side of our garden was propagated some years ago from the large specimen growing at historic Purrumbete homestead. It is part of our collection of New Zealand plants.



While it flowers regularly in our garden, we will have to find a partner for it to produce the interesting purple fruits it is known for.

Many will be familiar with the related *Melicytus dentatus*, the local Tree Violet, a smaller more shrubby and spiny species, which also has highly perfumed flowers and grows throughout the Stony Rises. We have this species growing in the garden too, but so far it hasn't flowered.

Both of these plants are classified in the botanical family Violaceae, and are indeed related to violets.

