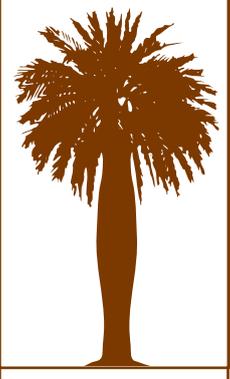


Jubaea



Friends of Geelong Botanic Gardens Inc Newsletter Volume 15 Issue 1 December 2014/January/February 2015

FRIENDS OF
GEELONG
BOTANIC
GARDENS



Remarkable Lord Howe

The Lagoon and Mt Gower from Malabar Hill

photographer Helena Buxton

A visit to Lord Howe Island archipelago offers a window into a time and place distant from the demands and pace of modern life. Remote in the Pacific Ocean, the island group was one of the last locations discovered during the age of sail and exploration. The great navigators who found and settled New Zealand, New Caledonia and the many islands of the Pacific missed Lord Howe. Remoteness, the pattern of ocean currents and Lord Howe's tiny size had protected the island group from discovery. Only when Henry Lidgbird Ball sighted the extinct volcanic cluster on his way to found a penal colony at Norfolk Island in 1788 did humans first set foot in this remote location.

On first landing the islands' fearless, flightless birds were gathered to fill the galley baskets and bellies of sailors. Species easily captured like the White Gallinule (*Porphyrio albus*), were quickly forced to extinction, their only evidence drawings and records found in museums. However the huge population of migratory birds, combined with great areas of inhospitable terrain, ensured the majority of species remained safe. Occasionally used by passing sailors, Lord Howe remained protected by its isolation and limited safe moorings.

Lord Howe was settled in June 1834 primarily by whalers and now forms part of New South Wales. It is home to a small, select group. Approximately 350 people maintain permanent residence and only 400 visitors may be in residence at any one time. Numbers are strictly limited to a total of 800 including permanent residents, visitors, island workers, occasional contractors and government employees. It is a place of extraordinary natural diversity. Steep rocky crags attributed to an ancient volcanic eruption form the geological base for the island group. These crags are reminders of sections of the Great Ocean Road, providing clean white sands, pebble beaches, rich coral reefs, and sub tropical and temperate forest. Clipped windswept slopes

and uninterrupted views over sculpted vegetation from the eastern edge transport a dreamer across a vast ocean to South America. Lord Howe is truly remote.

Most remarkable is the habitat that has evolved to survive the steep slopes and flattened crown of Mt. Gower. Beautiful capped clouds form over its peaks and nearby Mt Lidgbird. On Gower a rare 'Mist Forest' is made by the continuous cloud, with carpets of moss, ferns, orchids and palms harking back to the age of Gondwana. Rare species only grow on these remote slopes. A visit to Mt. Gower is an eight-hour journey by foot, clambering up steep rock slopes with ropes and backpacks; it demands a high level of fitness. Going up is one thing, coming down is another, and great care needs to be taken either way!!! Access is only allowed with an accredited guide and requires a special permit.

While much of the vegetation is endemic to Lord Howe many plant species also claim their origins to habitats along Australia's East Coast, New Zealand, New Caledonia and islands of the Pacific. Generations of migratory birds have no doubt been the dispersers of these plants. Four palm species are endemic to the island. Two are adapted to the slopes and mists of Mt. Gower. The other two, the 'Kentia Palm' (*Howea forsteriana*) and the 'Curly Palm'

... continued on page 2



Curly Palm



Aerial Roots & Kentias over a local driveway entry



Buttress Trunk & Curly Palm

(*Howea belmoreana*) (threatened species), grow on the lower slopes and protected alcoves of the island. Most famous is the 'Kentia Palm' that, until recently, formed a core part of business and income for Lord Howe families. Long recognized as an outstanding indoor-plant, the Kentia Palm has been grown and distributed across Europe for over 100 years by the horticultural industry based in the Netherlands. Once an important export, other islanders now growing the palm threaten the islands' income.

The bird life of Lord Howe is exceptional. The archipelago is listed as one of the top bird watching sites on the globe. Continual surveys are combined with careful management, particularly of habitats vital to breeding cycles. Management includes baiting for rats and pigs that feast on bird eggs, but especially target rare ground fowl or 'Woodhen', (*Tricholimnas sylvestris*). Once listed as one of the rarest birds in the world, the Woodhen is now conserved through a breeding program. Like many island environments vermin introduction is an unfortunate legacy of early human habitation and demands ongoing management. Dedicated teams make forays into distant

locations to establish and maintain baiting stations and continue eradication programs.

Weed infestation is also a major problem. Innocently introduced to Lord Howe for the home garden, some species have become garden escapees. Of real concern are Asparagus Fern (*Asparagus aethiopicus*) and Strawberry Guava (*Psidium cattleianum*). Teams of professional 'weeders' are brought in from NSW to assist with control of weed species. Workers are flown by helicopter, dropped onto slopes and undertake a program, usually kitted out with helmets and ropes for rock climbing and gear for descending. When work is finished they have to 'climb' their way out, its part of their job. Planting of indigenous species is also undertaken to help stop recolonisation of weedy plants.

Ocean life surrounding Lord Howe is rich. The archipelago has 28 islands, and multiple reefs fed by the warm East Australian Current that sweeps down the coastline through the Great Barrier Reef past Brisbane and folds out into the Pacific just north of Sydney. This current carries coral species to Lord Howe shores where they have colonized offering wonderful cool water snorkeling at a wide variety of locations including sites close to the beach edge. Diversity under the water's surface abounds, fish are fearless and turtles plentiful.

Lord Howe is a great place for people who enjoy walking and a variety of trails are open all year round. Trails are combined with bush paths open seasonally depending on the natural cycle of the bird life. Guided tours are offered for walking, diving and fishing. All fish caught is sold and consumed on the island. For the brave and the fit there is always a visit to Mt Gower. Boat trips are also offered to remote locations including the waters off Balls Pyramid and the nearby home of the famous 'Giant Stick Insect', *Dryococelus australis*, also known as the 'Tree Lobster'. Recorded as extinct in 1920, it was rediscovered in a remote part of the Lord Howe group in 2001, and is known as the rarest insect in the world. Melbourne Zoo is now breeding the species for conservation, education and reintroduction to Lord Howe.



Heading over to Rocky Point

Christmas at the Gardens

Christmas is a special time for celebrations and holidays, a time to replenish the spirit. What better place for this than our beautiful Geelong Botanic Gardens? Entice friends and family into the gardens with a Friends' Gift Voucher, realisable for membership, at plant sales, merchandise, and/or our many events.

Friends' Gift Fund

Don't forget the Friends' Gift Fund at Christmas time. Make a tax-deductable donation to advance our work. During 2015 we shall be supporting the maintenance of four pavilions, three in the Gardens and the Ladies' Kiosk in Eastern Park, as well as Education and other projects.

Contact our Friends' Office: 03 5222 6053 / info@friendsgbg.org.au

...from your Committee



We have had a most exciting Spring, and to top it off, the Friends have just been awarded a **Heritage Victoria grant of \$80,000** to restore the Ladies Kiosk in Eastern Park. Full credit to Annie McGeachy for her tenacious pursuit of the extensive documentation required for such a successful outcome, and her expertise in writing the application. We expect work to begin on the project as soon as possible in the new year.

Your Committee is now working with the Director and the City to advance some exciting projects for 2015-16, about which there will be more news as proposals develop.

Our Growing Friends broke all Plant Sales records, raising a huge \$7,300 over the weekend of October 25/26. The sunny weather and efforts made to advertise our events widely surely had their effect. We congratulate the Growers on their constant hard work throughout the year, propagating and growing on the many plants needed to stock Wednesday morning and seasonal weekend sales. These are now our biggest source of income.

Since the small profit made from Music in the Gardens for so much hard work and investment this year, we are trying other ways to raise income, and are finding that enough small events can boost our funds substantially. Back in August, Helena Buxton opened her home and garden as a fundraiser to a party of 25 Royal Botanic Gardens volunteers. Our guides met the visitors at the GBG gates with morning tea and walked them through the Gardens, before escorting them to Arundle where they were treated to a delicious lunch and a guided walk in Helena's garden. Judy Fyfe then took them to the Friends' Nursery, where they purchased many plants. It was a delightful day, with volunteers swapping stories and learning from each other, under bright sunny skies and in beautiful surroundings. Thank you Helena, Judy, Guides, cooks, and all who worked as a happy team that day.

Open Gardens Australia was another lively affair enjoyed in brilliant weather. Gwen and Malcolm Anderson opened

their lovely garden for the weekend of October 25/26, the same weekend as our Spring Plant Sales. More than 500 people were counted through the gate, making Gwen's OGA weekend a raging success. Gwen and Malcolm are generously donating their share of monies raised to the Friends' Gift Fund. (See the illustrated article for more information.)

Through the Garden Gates provided another fundraising opportunity, the last for 2014. Five gardens were visited via a self-drive tour during Monday November 17, with lavish morning and afternoon teas offered at Kerrie Moloney's and Gwen Anderson's gardens. Each garden was distinctive. Geelong College Year 4 students proudly showed their 'Enviro Garden' to fascinated visitors. Kerrie showed what could be done with a tiny inner city site, and offered tastings of her produce. 'Hill House' at Wandana Heights amused, delighted and astonished with massed plantings and incorporated objects; while West Geelong Community Garden residents demonstrated what can be achieved when people grow food together. At this garden, Judy Fyfe and her team ran a plant stall, netting almost \$500! Over seventy people bought tickets for the event. Through the Garden Gates has been a very pleasurable event since Helena Buxton first offered it three years ago. It is now a tradition! Thanks to Helena, Judy and the team of volunteers and visitors who, together, make it a great success.

Earlier, a successful meeting with 'Tourism' also promised to broaden our advertising across Victoria, and to raise the number of visitors we receive from cruise ships coming into Geelong. In October, fifty of Tourism Greater Geelong and Bellarine's *information* booth volunteers visited the Gardens. They staff the booths between Lara and Queenscliff, so we received good coverage for advertising the Gardens to potential visitors from a wide field. Following afternoon tea at the Teahouse, Liz, Jill, Sarah and David took the volunteers on a guided walk. It was a happy experience, the Gardens looking stunning in beautiful still weather and

clear sunshine. Thanks to Liz Bennetto for her leadership.

Our last speaker for the year, Anne Vale, visited the Friends on September 29 and spoke about the history of gardening with native plants. Her presentation was based on her doctoral dissertation, and showed important influences of one innovative garden maker upon another, drawing links between them, while elucidating the differences between the work of Glen Wilson, Paul Thompson, and Diane Snape. She also sold us some copies of her beautiful book. A few weeks later, the Royal Historical Society of Victoria presented Anne with the Victorian Community History Award for her book.

It was a pleasure to attend the Dick Southcombe Wider Geelong Flora Lecture 2014 delivered by John Arnott at the GBG in October. He addressed a wide range of threatened, endangered and extinct species with his usual enthusiasm and thorough knowledge, in a well-illustrated, informative and engaging presentation.

The Guides were hard at work over Spring with their regular walks, and special 'Discovery Walks', offering enticing topics: Chickory Trickery about tea and coffee, Billy Tea in historical and recent forms, and encouraging visitors to investigate our marvellous Pelargonium collection, and 'Plant yourself a Pele'.

Meanwhile, our talented Botanical Art School artists were preparing for their exhibition 'Vessels', installed in the GBG Meeting Room, November 21-23. Their work was exquisite. Friends celebrated the year with Christmas Drinks at the opening of the exhibition. (See the illustrated article for more information.)

Following the effectiveness of Working Groups last year, your Committee has formed ten Working Groups to advance FGBG business through 2014-15, with the intention of spreading the workload evenly across Committee. Working Groups also offer opportunities to invite non-Committee FGBG members with special interests to join us, working on specific projects. We hope to encourage participation of members who are not already engaged in Gardens volunteering but would like to join a small team advancing a project or event for a limited period. Just leave your name at the Friends' office if you would like to help.

Your Committee wishes all our members a happy and safe holiday period.

Judith Trimble

Would you like to be a guide at Geelong Botanic Gardens?

Guides are the main link between the GBG and the general public.

We meet once a month for sharing information, learning and developing new programs. The work is not onerous. Guides are rostered on duty in the gardens on Wednesday mornings and Sunday afternoons, sometimes taking visitors on a guided walk, but often just chatting to visitors or answering questions. Once a month, there is a Discovery Table where people can ask questions or collect the monthly Garden Highlights sheet, a Self-Guided Walk or a children's Garden Hunt Trail. All of these are prepared by the voluntary guides. Guides are also needed for 'booked walks', when organisations arrange for a special guided walk on a particular date.

Guides are in demand, and often busy, but it is a very rewarding role, shared with friendly colleagues. If you are interested in becoming a guide, you would be very welcome. Training is arranged for you, and you are encouraged to accompany other guides until you feel at ease on your own. **You do not have to know everything – nobody claims to be able to answer every question.** All that is required is an interest in the GBG and

the willingness to learn. Please contact the FGBG office if you think you might like to join us.

The next training program for FGBG Guides will begin on Monday, Feb 2, 2015.

*Liz Bennetto
Guide Coordinator.*

David Johnson on a Sunday Discovery Walk



Celebrating International Volunteer Day

International Volunteer Day 'was established by the United Nations (UN) General Assembly ... on 17 December 1985. Since then, governments, the UN system and civil society organizations have successfully joined volunteers around the world to celebrate the Day on 5 December.' (<http://www.unv.org/what-we-do/intl-volunteer-day.html>)

Friends of Geelong Botanic Gardens also celebrate the wonderful achievement of dedicated, selfless people who work for the greater good in many capacities, and we acknowledge our own volunteers as part of this wider community.

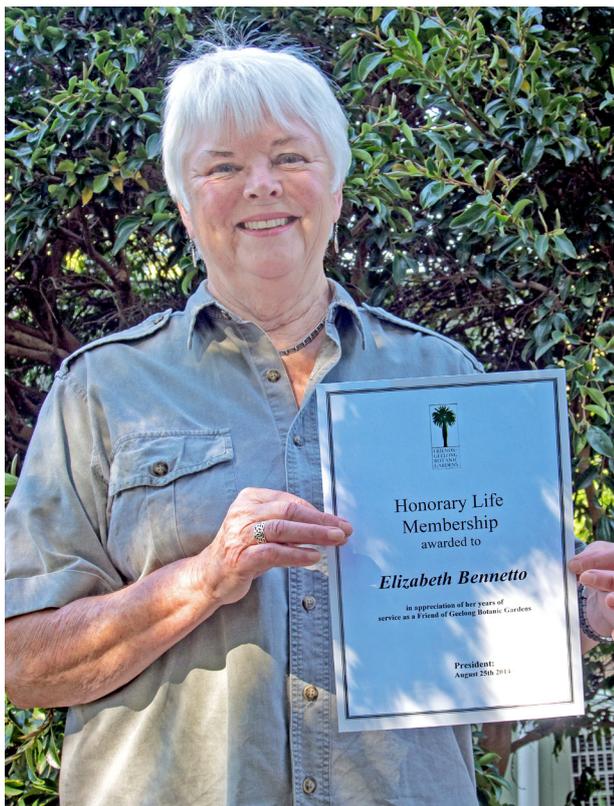


photo: Judith Kennedy

Biographical Notes

Liz Bennetto

The Growing Friends looked interesting, and Liz joined them working in the nursery in 2002, when George Young was in charge. In those days, there were hardly any Australian plants in the nursery, which created an immediate challenge. As the Growers group grew, Liz worked with Roz Hill and others to clarify plans and objectives, set a working pattern and develop a computerised database which allows a catalogue to be printed, as well as hundreds of printed plant labels every week. She continues as an enthusiastic Grower, looking after the computer database and working in the Australian Plants section of the Friends' Nursery.

From 2004 - 2009 Liz was a member of the Committee of Management of the Friends of Geelong Botanic Gardens, acting first as secretary, and later as events coordinator and marketing officer. She was responsible for the 2007 expansion of Music in the Gardens to four sessions in February, and under her direction 2006 - 2009 the event grew to draw large crowds and to become a major fundraiser for the FGBG.

The opening of the 21st Century Garden in 2002 was an exciting time for the GBG. At this time, Liz did her training to become one of the Gardens' voluntary guides. Liz recalls, "There was much to be learned and the task was initially daunting, but there is so much pleasure in showing visitors around our beautiful gardens that I have now done it for 12 years! I still enjoy the work and the company, and this year I have taken on the job of Guide Coordinator. It is a very rewarding role, working with friendly and enthusiastic people who share similar interests and values."

Liz was awarded an Honorary Life Membership for her services to the Friends in 2014.

Liz Bennetto is currently the Coordinator of the Volunteer Guides at Geelong Botanic Gardens.

Liz moved from Melbourne to Ocean Grove in 2001, after a career in education in various roles from secondary teacher to teacher-librarian to consultant. She has travelled extensively, especially in France, where after many previous vacation trips, she stayed for 6 months immediately after retirement. Adventure travel is also on her agenda, with trekking in Nepal, Tasmania's Overland Track and an Intrepid tour of Vietnam as highlights. Liz recently participated in a camping botanical outback tour across the Gibson Desert, finishing with West Australian wildflowers in season. Her other main interests currently are cycling, tennis, music, reading, family history and horticulture.

Liz was not looking forward to retirement, desperately needing something useful to do. Geelong Botanic Gardens filled the gap for someone who had always been interested in Australian plants and organic gardening: in fact Liz had completed a Certificate of Horticulture at Burnley, studying in the night class after work.

OPEN GARDENS with GWEN & MALCOLM ANDERSON

A constant stream of visitors to Aroha for Gwen and Malcolm Anderson's Open Gardens Australia weekend, demonstrated the event's popularity. With Helena's help, Gwen rallied her team of FGBG and OGA friends and family who staffed the gate, the plant stall, the cake stall, did the baking, provided a coffee cart, and placed stunning outdoor sculptures in the garden. At the Friends' table we met visitors and encouraged new potential Friends to join us and enjoy the beautiful Geelong Botanic Gardens and FGBG activities. Gwen and Malcolm were wonderful hosts, making visitors feel very welcome.



Crossed Paths, Aroha
photo: Allan Collier



Gwen Anderson, Aroha,
photo: Allan Collier

REGIONAL GARDENING — 'CURSE IT'

It has come to our attention that there is a disaster lurking in our gardens and we need to keep a close eye on the situation. What I am referring to is the humble *Echium Vulgare* [Viper's Bugloss], and unfortunately its cousin, *Echium Plantagineum* [Paterson's curse], is the root of the matter. As we know, the latter has been a curse for all farmers and many practices have been put into place in order to combat this pest.

Since 1990, the CSIRO has released five 'damaging agents'. 'The crown weevil was first released in 1990 and is currently the most damaging agent, often killing the weed outright on



Photographer Sarah Anderson:

Diseased *Echium* stem

a farm scale at a number of sites in New South Wales, Victoria and South Australia.' It is only recently that we have seen the evidence of one of these biological agents move into our domestic gardens; the crown weevil [*Mogulones Larvatus*] is attacking our fabulous *Echiums*.

'Visible signs can be the yellowing of the under leaves, then the development of black gall like

swellings a little further along the stems. When the stem is broken the weevils can be observed embedded in the stem.'

'Adult weevils emerge in Spring and feed on the leaves, producing circular-to-oval shaped holes before entering a summer inactive period. This

inactive period is broken by decreasing number of daylight hours in late summer to early autumn. Feeding, mating and egg-laying soon commence and continue until spring. Young larvae initially feed inside leaf stalks, moving down into the root crown. Most damage is caused by larvae feeding in the crown during autumn, winter and spring. Plants under heavy attack may die before seeds can be produced.'

Solution: Remove and dispose of any infected plants and keep a close watch on new seedlings as they mature.

References:

CSIRO, <http://www.csiro.au/Outcomes/Food-and-Agriculture/Patersons-curse.aspx>

NSW Department of Primary Industries,

<http://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/agriculture/pests-weeds/weeds/profiles/patersons-curse>



Photographer Sarah Anderson:

Mogulones Larvatus (the crown weevil larva)

Obituary: Jeanette Ball

The Friends and the Gardens have lost a loyal supporter with the recent death of Jeanette Ball, after a long illness. Jeanette will be fondly remembered by fellow Tea House volunteers and by the voluntary Guides. She brought unfailing kindness and meticulous attention to detail in both roles with FGBG.

After enjoying her Tea House work Jeanette became a Guide in 1999.

She quickly acquired a comprehensive knowledge of the plants and the history of the GBG. She enjoyed the challenge of guiding for new plant collections or special presentations.

She told the story of childhood visits to the huge wooden

conservatory for palms and ferns which dominated the original garden until the 1950s. The children called it "The Monkey House" because of the distorting mirrors at the ends of the long green corridors and it was an unfailing attraction.

Jeanette dedicated much time to researching all aspects of the walks she conducted, and would painstakingly follow up any queries from visitors.

She was a fine guide and a lovely person, and we miss her. We extend sympathy to Peter, and all her family at this sad time.

Rosemary Turner

Botanical Art

VESSELS EXHIBITION

What a joy!!! This exhibition was a must see.

Unlike a formal exhibition, Vessels was set up in small pockets of delightful applied botanical art, floral motifs and other decorative subjects. It impressed everyone.

The delicate work created by our skilled artists produced beautiful effects, and was a triumph.



Photographer
Rita Parkinson
Image: Waratah Plate
- Rita Parkinson



WORKSHOP FOR BEGINNERS

with John Pastoriza-Pinõl

A two day workshop will be held on Sat 17/ and Sun 18 January 2015.

Students will learn the basics of botanical art including: drawing to composition, painting techniques and introduction to colour theory. Students who enrol in this beginner's workshop may have completed some level of art but may wish to learn more about botanical. There are no prerequisites to enrol in this class just an eagerness to learn and a sense of adventure.

A materials list is available at the FGBG Office.

THE GILDED EXPERIENCE WORKSHOP

A three day workshop, will run from Tue 13/ Wed 14/ and Thu 15 January 2015

This workshop will focus on simplifying past and present sketches to create a striking contemporary modern design with Gold Leaf Application.

Enrol to learn the process and take part in a beautiful composite panel.

TERM 1 in 2015

The first term of Botanical Art Classes will commence the 30th of January 2015 Rita Parkinson and Dolores Sk-Malloni will be continuing with the GBG Tree Project (Summer Chapter).

Much excitement surrounds this project in the making. Some selected works will be on show during the 'Inspired by Nature' 2015 exhibition.

New students will have the opportunity to learn and contribute to this exciting project.



Photographer Anne Brown
Image: Ginkgo autumn leaves - Anne Brown.

Special FGBG Spring Activities: December 2014 • January • February 2015

Members are invited to register your address to receive our detailed monthly 'What's On' bulletin via email, or collect your copy directly from our FGBG office. **Please check our Website www.friendsgbg.org.au for more details of events.** All monies raised through these events are used in support of the Friends and their work for Geelong Botanic Gardens.

Regular guided walks are offered each Wednesday 11.00 am and Sunday 2 pm (except Sunday December 24)

Take a themed walk, or enjoy making your own discoveries with a knowledgeable Guide. Come solo or bring a party of interested friends. **Take a 'self-guided' walk at any time, using a themed program available from our website.**

DECEMBER

Sunday December 7 at 1.30 pm to 3.00 pm—Discovery Table

Meet FGBG Guides at the Discovery Table for interesting information and direction to key plants and seasonal change.

JANUARY

Tuesday 13, Wednesday 14, Thursday 15 at 9.30 am to 4.30 pm—The Gilded Experience 3-day Workshop with Dolores Sk-Malloni in the Geelong Botanic Gardens meeting room (located at the bottom of the gardens, parking next to the adjacent Friends' Nursery): \$180 members/\$210 non-members. Please book your place at the Friends' office (03 5222 6053).

Saturday 17 & Sunday 18 at 9.30 am to 4.30 pm—Botanic Art 2-day Workshop for Beginners with John Pastoriza-Pinöl in the Geelong Botanic Gardens meeting room (located at the bottom of the gardens, parking next to the adjacent Friends' Nursery): \$120 members/\$150 non-members. Please book your place at the Friends' office (03 5222 6053).

Sunday January 25 at 1.30 pm to 3.00 pm—Celebrating Australia

Visit our special Australia Day Discovery Table, or take a walk around the Australian plants at any time.

Friday 30—the first term of Botanical Art Classes will commence. New students will have the opportunity to learn and contribute to this exciting project. Please book your place at the Friends' office (03 5222 6053).

FEBRUARY

Monday February 2 at 9.30 am—Guide Training Course begins in the Geelong Botanic Gardens Meeting Room (located at the bottom of the Gardens. If you are interested in becoming a Guide, please phone the Friends' office (03 5222 6053) to join the group.

Sunday February 22 at 2.00 pm—Securing the Future with Recycled Water. Find out about stormwater harvesting and irrigation in Geelong Botanic Gardens and Eastern Park. Meet your guide at the front gates.

We are very pleased to hear your suggestions for new items, and your responses.

Surprises and delights a bound during Through the Garden Gates:

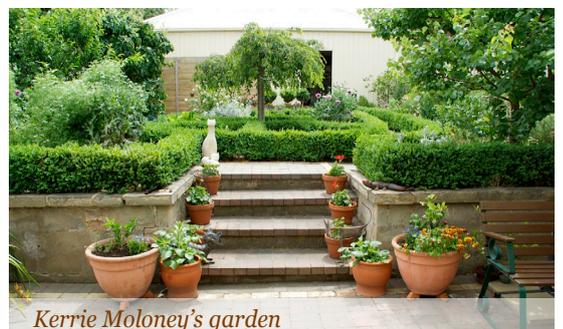


Photographer: Allan Collier

Hill House objet d'arts



*Geelong College 'Enviro Garden':
The Indonesian Project, Pizza Oven, and Sculpture*



Kerrie Moloney's garden

Submissions for the Jubaea Autumn issue are due by 1 February 2015

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