



# Papyrus

No. 75 Spring 2021

## NEWSLETTER OF THE FRIENDS OF BURNLEY GARDENS

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## President's Report



As we all wave a far-from-fond-farewell to Covid lockdowns, it seems a great time to be writing a report for the Spring edition of Papyrus. What a glorious first weekend of freedom in Melbourne! Nature has contrived a fitting fanfare: superb weather (especially for gardens and gardeners) and our gardens are finally exploding with lush growth and abundant blooms.

I have just taken the opportunity to call in to Burnley, and how stunning it all looks! I went with a touch of trepidation, as we have had a tiny bit of inappropriate behaviour in the Gardens during the lockdowns, but I can report that exemplary behaviour was the order of the day. Reasonable numbers of very appreciative visitors to the gardens, easels dotted on the lawns and artists at work, discreet (and tempting) picnics laid out at suitable distances. Not a single rampaging child or dog anywhere! This is what makes us realise that the Gardens – the ones that we FOBG Members do so much so support – really are deeply appreciated and admired by visitors.

I'm sure everyone would join with me in thanking Andrew Smith, who goes above and beyond the call of duty, to maintain such a very high standard in our Gardens.

As we all know, Melbourne seems to have been singled out by the weather gods in recent months. The second, more recent mini-tornado actually brought down the timber wisteria arbour near the Main Building – complete with the wisteria itself, which was so lovingly pruned by Jacque Chirgwin not long ago. Renovation of this arbour was one of the earliest projects funded by FOBG. Now, it seems, it will be back on the agenda... a timely reminder of how crucial our efforts are to the maintenance of the gardens.

over

## President's Report *continued....*

Despite all the limitations imposed upon us during Covid, I am very heartened to report that our financial membership is now in excess of 200, despite the usual expected annual attrition rate. Another encouraging aspect of our membership is that we are finding we have an increasing percentage of *local residents* among the membership, and of people taking up the option of a 5-year or Life Membership, all of which bodes well for our future!

The first of our talks since the last newsletter was presented by our Patron, Dr. Greg Moore, who gave a fascinating presentation following the AGM: 'Connection – the role of connectedness in green space'. If you missed it, you can access the recording on the FOBG website – highly recommended! In September we were delighted to welcome respected and long-term former staff member Dr. Peter May. Peter's talk on rain-fed gardening, based largely on his ventures in Central Victoria, resonated greatly with the large audience, and will become available soon on our website.



Peter May's rain-fed garden in Kyneton, Central Victoria

## President's Report *continued....*

Most recently, in October we welcomed Sydney-based horticulturalist, landscape architect and garden historian Stuart Read, to talk via Zoom on the *Three S's (Singapore – Spain – Sydney) - How Botanic Gardens Remain Relevant*. This very thought-provoking and well patronised talk was also recorded and will appear soon on our website.

On behalf of our membership, I thank Stuart, Peter and Greg most sincerely for supporting our organisation and for giving their time so freely and willingly.

On the subject of recordings, the following recent talks can also be accessed via our website. Information regarding access to the 'Members Only' section on our website, will be sent out very soon to the membership:

- Connection – the role of connectedness in green space
- Dr Chris Williams talk '*Collingwood Children's Farm & other Urban Horticultural Projects*
- John Delpratt's talk on Western Victorian grasslands
- Successful grafting, with David Beardsell
- Birds of Nillumbik with Sonia Ross.

Coming up very soon is a talk by one of Burnley's most illustrious alumni, **Robert Boyle**. For over 45 years now, Robert and his team have been invited to create gardens for people of every walk of life and from every part of the Australian community. Members of FOBG will be particularly aware of Rob's work right here on Campus: the beautiful stream and rock pool system in our Native Garden was among his earliest work (see a recent photo on page 8 ). We are delighted that he has accepted our invitation to talk to The Friends on **Thursday 18 November**.

Watch out for details soon of our final event for the year, here in the Gardens on **Saturday 4 December** – save the date!

As always, I conclude by thanking most sincerely our wonderful FOBG Committee, for their enthusiasm and support during what has definitely been a time of great challenges for organisations such as ours.

**Sandra McMahon**  
President, FOBG.



## News from the archives *by Jane Wilson*



A couple of weeks ago the FOBG Guides were able to meet up again for lunch in the Gardens. I have been able to continue working in the Archives lately, and I have continued to upload photographs to the Victorian Collections catalogue. After lunch I continued doing this, and the first photograph I picked up to scan was this one with one of the Guides, Leesa Abbinga, when she was a student at Burnley. I was struck by how happy and healthy they looked. Leesa is the girl with long hair standing on the left of the photograph. She believes it was taken C. 1968. Leesa sent me some more information about the subsequent careers of the team members:



### Back row, left-right

**1. Alexandra Leesa Malimonenko (Abbinga)** Went into Hort teaching from 1971 till 2018. Worked in England 1974/75 managed Leisure and Garden Centre in London, and worked at Kew Gardens Nursery and Gardens. Training at Burnley was recognised as equivalent to Kew. Methods taught were identical to skills taught there.

### 2. Iris Siletto

Went on and became a Vet in the Pakenham area



### 3. Rosemary Weekes

Married a fellow in her year and they had a nursery in Tasmania

### 4. Joy Thurgood

Landscaping. Married Peter Harrison in her year. He was Superintendent of Melbourne City for a time.

### 5. Christine Hartshorne ?

### 6. Cynthia Forti.

Left horticulture and became a secretary.

### 7. Judy Galletely.

Married a nurseryman and they had a nursery. Kinvale Gardens on Springvale Rd. They moved to country. Broadford.

### Front row. Left to right

#### 1. Jennifer Eaton

Worked in Nursery of Melb City council as propagator.  
Became Landscape Architect and Teacher of Horticulture.

#### 2. Kirsty Gunn.

Married Lyndley Craven from our year. Moved to Canberra. Lindley worked at the Botanic Gardens on reclassifying Myrtaceae etc. She donated his immense collection of Rhododendrons and Azaleas to the Rhododendron Gardens in Olinda after he died a few years ago.

### and some reminiscences.....

“Well we did play sport at Burnley. There were also tennis teams as I recall as well as ten pin bowling. Swimming sports also were held at Harold Holt Pool which was a lot of fun and not very serious.

I think we played other colleges and I seem to remember playing hockey against Swinburne from Prahran. Our sports field was in the cow paddock more or less where Quad is now.

As it turned out their spectators turned up with flour bombs and the match ended with them bombing us. We were very shocked but everyone ended up laughing.”

Most of the Archives catalogue is now on the Victorian Collections site. The photographs are still being added, but it is a slow process and will take some time to complete. However, if you go to [www.victoriancollections.net.au](http://www.victoriancollections.net.au), click on **Collections** along the top of the screen and then type in University of Melbourne Burnley Campus Archives, you will be able to see some of the wonderful photographs. Scroll down to the bottom of the first page, click **Show More** and the photographs will appear.

*PS notice the old Burnley logo on Joy Thurgood's top. There is no truth to the rumour it was a marijuana leaf.*

- Ed.

## **Propagation group report, October 2021, *by Glenys Rose, Group Coordinator***



I hope that this report finds you all well and gaining solace from your gardens, plants inside your home or visits to local parks and gardens. Victoria really is the garden state even though our number plates no longer acknowledge this.

The Propagation Group is gradually returning to Burnley Campus to maintain and care for the FOBG plants, after an absence of many months. First we need to complete the Covid protocols required by the University of Melbourne. Once the Campus is fully open again we will be delighted to welcome new recruits with experience in gardening, or strong interest in plants, to the group. An induction to the Nursery and propagation training will be provided.

An announcement will be made later regarding the date for the next plant sale, which will be before Christmas - perhaps a Kris Kringle gift? PS. As I write this the lockdown has been cancelled and all of Melbourne is able to move more freely. Take care of yourselves and we will see you in the country areas when that is allowed. I am looking forward to doing the drive down the Hamilton and Princes Highways to catch up with the proppas after 10 months absence.

## **Membership report, *by Cheryl Andrews, Membership Coordinator***



Since the previous Papyrus Newsletter No 74 in Winter 2021, our membership has increased to 201 members. I would like to extend a warm welcome to the 6 new members who have recently joined our group and welcome back to those members who have rejoined. Thanks to all our loyal members for their continuing support and involvement in our activities which have mainly been via Zoom meetings over the past months.

## **Social media report, *by Jill Kellow and Jacquie Chirgwin***

Not a week goes by without several requests at least to join our Facebook group, which went from 494 to 500 members in the time it took to edit this newsletter, while our Instagram page has a massive 1,085 followers. A mighty troop!

## From the Gardens *by Andrew Smith*



The Gardens have certainly benefited from the abundant rainfall over the last few months; the Grasslands are having a great year, with the culmination of the dense planting done over the last 15 years now starting to make an impact. It's amazing how many Chocolate Lilies (*Arthropodium strictum*) it takes to create an impressive visual display, and also the amount of time it takes to get the underground tubers big enough to produce stems that rise up and flower above the taller grass.

The Sticky Everlasting (*Xerochrysum viscosum*) is also proving a wonderful addition to the Grassland, not just in spring but all the way through until autumn; you really can't go wrong with including it in any informal landscape planting, as it provides colour even in mid-February.

The other notable bonus with the additional rain this season is the amount of water in the Native Garden bottom pond. A couple of years ago I asked the Waterways group (known as WERG, Waterways Ecosystem Research Group) based at Burnley to raise the spillway height of the bottom pond, to increase the water capture capability and therefore reduce the amount of water required to keep it operational. It's incredible what a 30 cm height extension to the spillway can do to the overall water catchment and associated size increase of the pond itself. As you may be able to detect in the photo below, the bottom pond now looks about a third bigger when it's full, a big size difference from the addition of just a few rocks.



*Xerochrysum viscosum* and *Arthropodium strictum* in the Grassland Garden



## From the Gardens *continued*

On a less cheerful note, I wish I could be just as positive about the high visitor numbers, and misuse of the Gardens by some local folks who have had access to the Gardens during lockdown.

Although I'm not here on weekends, from what I have been told takes place, the damage remaining after weekends, and what I see during the week, there seem to be a few who consider the Gardens to be a place where everyone can do as they please, and don't understand the need to cherish and respect this 168-year-old Garden. It's a perplexing question: how do we teach people to differentiate between council parkland, and manicured landscapes? At present, I'm seeing parents more interested in catching up with friends and adult family, while their unsupervised children entertain themselves, bashing through vegetation as a shortcut and picking flowers to create a carpet on pathways 20 metres long. Vehicles have even been driven onto lawns and down



pathways that are obviously not wide enough for a car! Signage displayed to modify usage and behaviour have been ignored. This undesirable behaviour is not the norm, and I hope that with restrictions being eased this week, the majority of it will cease, when people can once again visit each other's houses and travel further afield.

What a difference a height extension has made to the bottom pond in the Grassland Garden



## Meet the grounds staff

Have you ever wondered who keeps the Burnley gardens looking so fabulous? With the help of Gardens Manager Andrew, a Team is engaged from Programmed Property Services. Andrew is very happy with this arrangement, as the Gardens have never looked better. The work is done to a high standard, which is written in the specifications by Andrew. Here are three of them at work - l to r: Maria, Bronte and Team Leader Sam, who Andrew says is a “passionate plant nerd” .



Thinking readers might like to get to know these very important people a little better, we asked them some questions. The answers are as follows:

### *What is your favourite plant?*

**Bronte** – One is too hard to pick. I’m a big fan of flowering perennials that look good alive and dead.

**Sam**- My favourite plant is the one I don’t have yet.

**Maria**: I really like fruit trees. Finding a ripen fruit is a sensory experience. The taste, the look and the perfume of the fruit make me feel very happy and satisfied.

### *What is your least favourite gardening job?*

**Bronte and Sam**: Anything involving getting into ponds in the middle of winter! Melbourne can be icy when submerged in water!

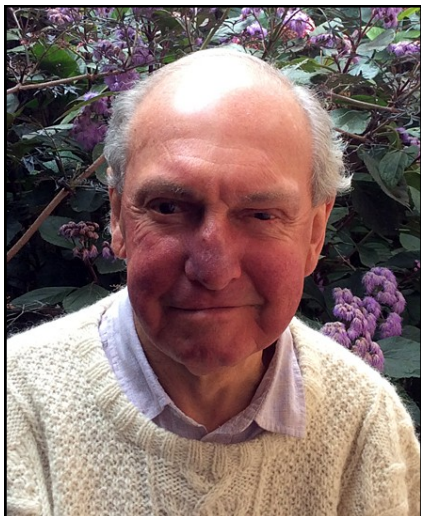
**Maria**: Clipping of tall hedges, I like detailing jobs, like weeding in garden beds.

### *What makes the Burnley Gardens so special / important?*

**Maria**: The biodiversity and peaceful environment

**Bronte and Sam**: The diversity of flora and fauna that’s found in every corner of the garden makes it an exceptionally special place. Speaking to visitors about their connection and history to the gardens is one of the best parts about working here. We love that the gardens are different from one week to the next and there’s always an interesting flower that appears from nowhere!

## The Mediterranean Garden Society *by Malcolm Faul*



The Mediterranean Garden Society (MGS) originated in Greece in 1994, to act as a forum for everyone who has a special interest in the plants and gardens of mediterranean climatic regions. Although based in Greece, there are now active branches in Europe, California, and southern Australia, and members in 38 countries. The administrative committee can be drawn from any country – the current President is Victorian member, Caroline Davies.

The Victorian branch, started in 2000, organises local events, to complement the benefits and activities offered worldwide. It is particularly focused on climate-compatible gardening in our current and forecast context.

Its members comprise garden designers, horticulturists, landscapers and enthusiastic gardeners, both experienced and novice. We are part of a growing network of gardeners who believe that water conserving gardens do not have to look dry and that water restrictions and recurring drought should not be seen as unmitigated disasters.

Using a plant palette drawn from those regions of the world that have similar climates to ours, we believe that it is possible to have a beautiful garden while conserving water and minimizing irrigation. This will include a range of attractive plants endemic to southern Australia. The MGS seeks to encourage people to garden in harmony with their climate by facilitating the exchange of information and gardening experience.

Why? Because this is where we live. If we work with what we are given - acknowledging the parameters of our climate, our geography and our water resources, it is possible to make gardens of great beauty, which require minimal maintenance.



Larger private gardens mimic the landscape – no watering here, Corfu



## The Mediterranean Garden Society *continued*

If we ignore the constraints placed upon us by our climate, gardening will be a chore and a battle against our environment - we will be forever engaged with a much more powerful force. But if we withdraw from the fight and re-assess our resources, acknowledge and accept what we are given – the winter rain, the summer heat, and the diminishing and fluctuating water supply – we



Paths bordered by hardy plants draw the eye towards the house as focal point, rural Victoria

can look for creative ways to use them. We can look to other places with similar climates – draw from their plant resources and design solutions. We can share our ideas and successes and failures.

With regard to species available, the range is vast – there are 5 Mediterranean climate areas of the world (the Mediterranean basin, California, South Africa, Chile and Southwestern and southern Australia) Each of these has a diversity of endemic plants, all of which are adapted to the specific conditions of the mediterranean climate zone of their origin. For any committed gardener, the prospect of exploring and using these should be hugely exciting. The MGS does not prescribe particular gardening styles – rather it encourages gardeners to find their own style using plants adapted to our climate, whether they be indigenous to the area or from a similar climatic zone.

In pursuing these aims, the Society has developed a wide range of tools to assist members, some of which are available to the general public

The website ( <https://www.mediterraneangardensociety.org> ) has a wealth of gardening information, reports on events worldwide, exceptional photographs and much more. There are links to subsidiary websites operated by some local branches. For instance, South Australia and Italy have their own sites. The website also has links to branch events through the respective branch pages. Exploring the website can be most rewarding.



Right: Extreme clipping yields special effect on Corfu

## The Mediterranean Garden Society *continued*



Large urns and gravel paths are typical, Corfu

planned AGM in Morocco was scuttled by Covid. The AGM is an annual opportunity for members from a wide range of countries to socialize and exchange views. Similar opportunities are provided through other tours to such locations as Turkey, South Africa and the Canary Islands, with a focus on plants in their original environment. In these times of Covid, the Italian branch has organized a series of illustrated talks in English on Zoom, accessible to members everywhere. When we can again travel, members are welcome to join in the activities of any local branch.

Given our remote location, the Australian branches decided to organise an Australian equivalent to the AGM, so that more local members could attend. As a result, there have so far been two Australian conferences, augmented by garden visits: Mildura and Castlemaine.

However, where gardens are being established in close proximity to native bushland, members are advised to be alert to the weed potential of introduced species. Members are rewarded by “The Mediterranean Garden”, a quarterly journal of articles on plants, gardening techniques, private and public gardens, as well as book reviews and much else.

Victorian members receive an occasional newsletter and access to the events organized locally, generally 4-5 per year.

The Society organises tours associated with its AGM, giving members the opportunity to visit iconic private and public gardens in whichever country the meeting is held, which is usually either a southern European country or California. There has been one in Australia, and a



Rustic steps, patios and yew trees are typical features, Vorres Museum, near Athens

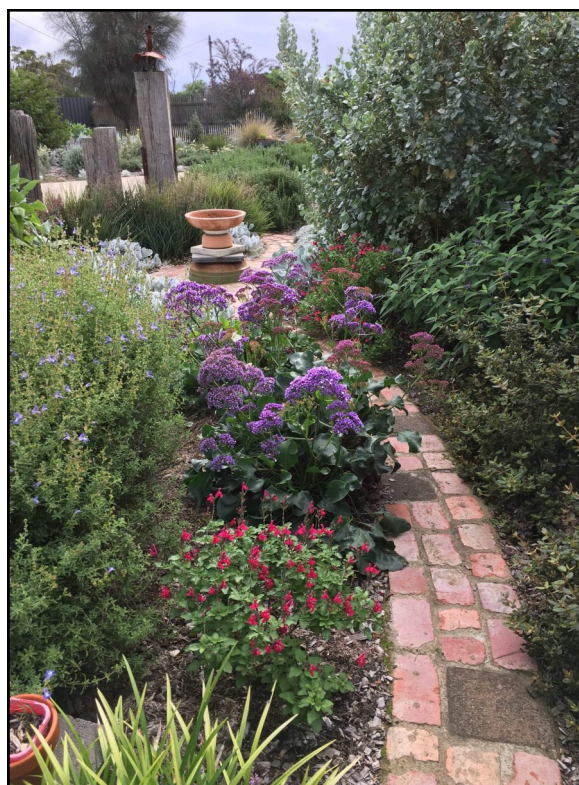


## The Mediterranean Garden Society *continued*

- The plant forum, operated through the website and free to all, has ready answers to a wide range of plant and garden issues, generally provided by experts their field – you don't have to be a member to contribute – foundation member Trevor Nottle has many entries, as does non-member Fermi de Sousa from the Alpine Plant Society (Victorian branch).
- An important part of the MGS is Sparoza, its internationally-recognised experimental garden outside Athens, which has been maintained and developed by the Society since the Society's inception. It is open to members by appointment.
- The Seed Exchange is managed by a French member. With Australia's strict plant quarantine, receiving seeds through this service can be hit-and-miss. However, several members have successfully sourced seeds from the exchange. There is no problem contributing.
- New members receive the Society's leaflets on Mediterranean gardening in their welcome pack. "Making a Dry Garden", "Mulch and Compost", "Conserving Water" and "Drought Tolerant Shrubs"
- Members will get a warm and fuzzy feeling from contributing to the viability of the Society that produces these resources and makes a disproportionate splash in the worldwide amenity horticulture pond.



Strong contrasting foliage is a feature of the Kapitany garden, Victoria



Coastal cottage garden in Victoria



## Our Hawthorn Haven *by Kerin Tulloch, FOBG Committee member*

### A story of our garden of 38 years.

My husband and I are amateur but interested gardeners who have spent more than half our lives in our East Hawthorn abode. It is very challenging to encapsulate a few of the myriad things it has meant to us over all these years, but I'll give it a go.

When we moved in, in 1983, we had 5 and 4 year old sons. Being around the corner from the local primary school was a huge bonus. Our 3<sup>rd</sup> son was born 3 years later.



The house, a cream brick English style house, on a rectangular block of 900 square metres, with a deep north facing back garden, was surrounded by a jungle of Bamboo, Tradescantia and Oyster Plant. The first task was to get rid of those plants with countless trips to the tip.

In trying to draw inspiration for this article, I asked our sons what first came to mind about our garden from growing up there. Their memories included climbing and jumping from the trees or garage, playing on the swings, mowing the lawn short for the cricket pitch, the smell of cut grass, hitting the ball to the far corners amongst the thickest bushes, trampolining, children's parties, endless Feijoas and Citrus. In short it was a childhood paradise. In recent years our grandchildren have loved hide and seek amongst the bushes where there could even still be some old cricket balls! They also love climbing the grapefruit tree.

The previous owners had built the house just after World War 2, when building materials were limited, and they were only permitted to build up to 11 squares. With an expanding family they added to the house several times. We have only done internal renovations so there has been little increase to the external footprint.

We loved the layout of the garden with gentle slopes and with the house leading outwards from the kitchen family room. It is wonderful to look out over the garden from inside and to have easy access to the patio and garden from there.

## Our Hawthorn Haven - *continued*

After clearing the jungle, one of the first tasks was to install agricultural pipes across the back lawn, as it was extremely soggy in winter. That was hugely successful to this day. A task carried out by husband James and oldest son Stephen.



Swings were then installed in a huge Ash tree in the back corner, and in a variegated *Acer negundo*, which were constantly in use until sadly both trees died. Hopefully not due to the swings!! The boys spent many hours high up in the *Acer negundo* plucking out the non-variegated leaves! One of their more helpful activities!! Surprisingly they didn't even have to be asked to do it!

Given its size and northern aspect the back garden was perfect for the planting of many fruit trees. Initially we planted the usual citrus and deciduous fruit trees, however over the years we found the latter to be quite a lot of work, fruiting all at once (and having to deal with the produce all at once before it spoiled). We also found the deciduous trees quite unattractive in the winter. As a result we now have mainly citrus including lemon, lime and grapefruit. They get a lot of sun, except for two Meyer lemons at the front of the house which are shaded by the house in winter. Surprisingly the Meyers still fruit well despite their aspect. The citrus look fantastic all year round, with green glossy leaves but come into their own in winter and spring with their bright yellow fruit which stand out like beacons. An extra bonus is the low level of maintenance required to keep them healthy and productive.

Trimming their lower trunks makes them even more pleasing to the eye. It is always such a bonus when one has enough produce to give some away to family and friends. The fruit will stay on the tree for some time as well, which is the easiest storage of all. Apart from a Japanese plum we have several fruiting evergreens, Feijoas and a Strawberry Guava, both cropping in autumn.





## Our Hawthorn Haven - *continued*

We have tried to do a number of sustainable things around our property, the first being to install solar panels on our garage roof. This has been very successful for us, as when we signed up, we got a very good rate for the electricity we sell back to the grid and that rate will only phase out in a couple of years from now. We haven't paid an electricity bill in years although we've been home a lot in lockdown so that may change.

One of the next things was to install tanks to collect our rainwater. We have two 7000 litre tanks side by side, as we couldn't have got anything bigger along the driveway. In the process of installation our back garden was turned into a war zone, and whilst we had been contemplating getting some landscaping advice for the front garden, we then decided we needed help in the back as well. Fortuitously the plumber installing the tanks had worked with Steve Beavis, a Burnley graduate, who we subsequently employed. We loved the experience of working with Steve and were delighted with his services. We gave him a fairly free reign, and have enjoyed our garden so much more given the enormous improvements he has made over several stages.



Hard landscaping in the form of Castlemaine slate has enlarged and transformed our entertaining areas at the back, and big rocks in the front garden have become great spots for pondering. The lawn at the back was replaced with Sir Walter Buffalo grass which is brilliant, especially since it needs no mowing between April and September .and always looks lush and green.



## Our Hawthorn Haven - *continued*

Around this time the single storey house to our west was demolished, and a developer built 2 double storey townhouses. That was the single most difficult time in all our years in our property as we had been so spoilt to have endless sun from the north and west and this was a huge threat to our western sun. We initially thought of moving, but decided to stay put and see how it went. We got Steve to build pergolas from recycled cypress to help protect our privacy from next door. We planted ornamental grapes on the pergolas, and after much trial and error managed to beat the possums that were eating the new buds by putting shade cloth on top of the pergola. We now enjoy shade and beautiful autumn colours, *sans* possums !!



We also put trellis up on the fence and grew creepers to hide a little of the new building. We do miss the western sun streaming into the house ,especially in winter, but in summer we are shaded from the west. We planted *Ficus hillii* along the northern and eastern boundaries as a future proofing against developments in those directions. We could let the Ficus go higher if we have overlooking but are currently leaving them at fence height. They have been a wonderful backdrop to the rest of the garden as well. Luckily early interest in them from the possums subsided.



## Our Hawthorn Haven - *continued*



*Ficus hillii* along the boundary



Pergola and shade cloth



## Our Hawthorn Haven - *continued*

Steve planted mainly natives in the front garden, adding a lot of new soil, which made such a difference in how well things started to grow. In addition, we did away with our front lawn, as well as on the nature strip which has been successfully planted out. Surprisingly the nature strip requires far less time than with mowing grass. Our local council at the time did not approve of planting out the nature strip, but we have done it in the



main with low growing plants. I think councils are beginning to think differently about such issues now. We are very happy to only have grass at the back of our property so we could in theory go away without needing work done at the front for a reasonable length of time.

Last but by no means least of our sustainable practices has been to compost everything we can, it saves so much from having to be transported elsewhere and converts in one of our 3 compost bins or worm farm into the most wonderful soil full of worms to spread around the garden. Over the years it has enriched our soil a great deal and has lessened the need to get new soil in, sometimes a problem these days with poisonous additives. The

more one gardens, the more one realizes how essential good soil is for many plants.

One always has some “why didn’t we do x years ago” moments. One was to replace our side gates, which we had to open manually, with a roller door. What a difference that made!! A second was to replace the last of our windows, all at the front of the house, with pvc double glazed windows, which we only did recently. That has made a significant difference to our heat retention and to the security of our house with the superior locking systems of the new windows.

## **Our Hawthorn Haven - *continued***

Alice Sebold once said " I like gardening. It's a place where I find myself when I need to lose myself" (1) Our garden is infinitely therapeutic, relaxing, giving, forgiving, productive and so many more things as well. James and I feel very blessed to have had so many years slowly shaping our garden into what it is today. I hope many readers will be able to have an experience of nurturing a garden, no matter how small, and enjoy the immense pleasure it brings.

1. Alice Sebold "Above and Beyond" Interview with Katharine Viner, [www.theguardian.com](http://www.theguardian.com). August 23, 2002

### ***Flourless Whole Meyer Lemon Cake***

Kerin has given us a recipe for a way to use up those surplus Meyer Lemons. It comes from the interweb, from Katy's Food Finds, with the advantage of being tested for us by Kerin, who has tried it and says it's delicious.

This flourless cake is a very moist, 'just set' cake and is delicious as it is, dusted liberally with icing sugar or served with a dollop of double cream, whipped cream or thick yoghurt, and can double as a dessert. This is a very simple recipe as once the lemons are boiled, everything is combined in a food processor. You can even prepare the lemons the day before. Different quantities of eggs and almond meal can be used to make a more conventional, more set almond cake.

### **Ingredients**

3 Meyer Lemons \*550-600g total weight – once boiled you want 280g lemon (seeds, excess juice and any inside pieces the seeds are attached to discarded).

1 3/4 cups caster sugar (385g)

5 eggs (large)

2 cups almond meal (210g)

1 tsp baking powder

### **Method**

Preheat the oven to 160°C (320°F). Grease the base and sides of a 22cm or 24cm spring-form cake tin lightly with butter or oil and line the base with baking paper.

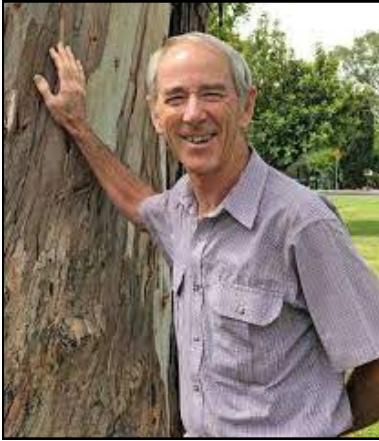
Place the halved and cooled boiled lemons into the bowl of a food processor and blitz for 20-30 seconds until almost smooth with little chunks of rind still visible. Add the sugar and eggs to the lemon pulp in the food processor and blend for 40 seconds, scraping down the sides of the bowl half-way through. Next add the almond meal and baking powder and blitz in 2-3 quick bursts to combine all the ingredients.

Bake in the preheated oven for 1 to 1hr 15 minutes (this cake takes 1 hour in my oven) until the top is golden and a skewer inserted into the middle of the cake comes out clean. Remove from the oven and set aside to cool for 15 minutes in the cake tin. Place a piece of baking paper over the top of the cake and turn the cake out onto a wire cooling rack (the baking paper will be a barrier between the cake and wire rack and will stop the cake from sticking to it. Cool completely before turning onto a cake plate. Decorate by dusting liberally with icing sugar.



## The strange and stupid things people do to trees...!!!!

*by Dr Greg Moore*



I never cease to be amazed at what otherwise apparently sensible and sane people do to trees. Do they forget or did they never know that trees are alive – not lamp posts with leaves? Trees should be treated with the respect due all living things and if this is taken to heart many common and potentially dangerous problems will be avoided.

When the Tree of Knowledge, in Barcaldine, so important in the history of the ALP and Australian politics, was poisoned in 2006, a political motive was immediately suspected. Similarly, when the Separation Tree in the Melbourne Botanic Gardens was vandalized more than once, there were suspicions of a political agenda. At the time of these killings, the media noted that vandalism of trees in Australia is a rare and event, but is it?

At many major intersections you see trees damaged by signs nailed to their trunks advertising garage sales or wires wrapped around trunks and major branches. No one approaches something that they see as a living thing with a hammer and then nails into its structure. People aren't villains but don't realize they may be doing serious damage.



These healthy spotted gums were removed because they blocked a ratepayer's view

## The strange and stupid things people do to trees...!!!!

The sad truth is that many mature publically owned trees are killed each year. Larger councils with tree populations of between 50-100,000 trees often have somewhere between 5 and 20 trees killed each year. Some, such as the 6 Chinese Elms poisoned with diesel fuel this week are deliberate acts of ratepayer vandalism. Some killings are by residents trying to secure a better view of the sea or mountain vistas, others are by those who resent the nuisance of falling fruits, flowers and leaves, and yet others are lost in the course of urban development and renewal or house renovations.

Killing of large old trees to secure coastal views is common enough for seaside councils to place large billboards in the place where the tree once stood advertising that it had been illegally killed. Last month the removal of old banksias along harbour frontage in Sydney resulted in multiple shipping containers being placed where trees once grew. The billboards and containers are left in place until the tree, or more usually trees, planted to replace the vandalized tree have grown larger than the obstruction.

While the vandalism of young, recently planted street trees can be less than 10%, rates of 90% are not uncommon. The damage ranges from theft and removal of whole trees to broken branches and shattered trunks. The level of damage varies from community to community and even within neighbouring streets. In one seaside suburban planting, 90% of the trees were vandalized, until arborists struck on the tactic of planting new trees with a large stake that wasn't tied to the tree. The stakes were regularly and frequently removed but the trees were left alone and vandalism fell to 10%.

There are many different types of vandalism - intended, accidental, incidental, bureaucratic and commercial. Many trees are damaged by those undertaking development and building works, Sometimes this damage is cynical, resulting from a cost/benefit analysis – the fines are small and land is valuable. However, damage from machinery and accidental fuel spills is also widespread.

More trees are damaged bureaucratically each year for powerline clearing, road works, large infrastructure projects and utility installation than by intended acts of vandalism. These tree removals numbering in the tens of thousands each year can change the character of a suburb or town overnight and ruin the roadside landscapes of regional Australia for decades. Even Avenues of Honour, such as the nationally significant avenue at Ballarat, are not exempt from such treatment.

The real question that damage to trees raises is, "Why do people do it?" Sometimes selfishness and greed are clear motives, but there are also those who kill trees deliberately with a purposeful outcome in mind, or in a spiteful or vengeful dispute with neighbours or society, or to exact revenge for a real or perceived wrong.



There are also those in bureaucracies who remove trees simply because they can and believe that they have a legal right to do so. This is happening all over Victoria at present in the name of improved road safety or travel times, the removal of level crossings and the expansion of rail networks. Many of the trees removed for these large projects could have been spared at very little cost, but they go on the mantra of the bottom line, or easier and quicker work. When trees are officially valued at nothing and you have a legislated right to remove them can any government authority or bureaucrat resist using this power? Sometimes you wonder, when community groups protest at tree removals such as those at Gandolfo Gardens, or currently at Surrey Hills, whether more trees are removed just to teach people a lesson.



Not all vandalism is about deliberate destruction. People damage trees by casually tugging at a branch which snaps, and street trees are always at risk from vehicular collisions. Furthermore, some trees fall

victim to the fanaticism or compulsion of collection. Rare or unusual trees do sometimes go missing from public gardens due to those craving to complete a collection, or who convince themselves that they will give the tree better care. In the early days of the re-discovery and release of the Wollemi Pine, several gardens had specimens stolen, and others cosseted their trees in large steel guards and barriers for protection.

Tree vandalism represents a real cost to individuals, local governments and communities. A large and significant tree may have an amenity value of \$15-30,000 or much more depending on size and species, as well as all of the functional aspects of value such as environmental services. They have been grown and maintained for decades and sometimes centuries. Young trees are also costly to plant and establish and so there are real economic losses.

However, the real costs to society go way beyond these immediate losses. The real losses are the opportunity cost of young trees that never mature and the losses of amenity, functions and services that the premature loss of a mature tree entails. Tree vandalism is really a theft from the future that robs future generations of Australians of the joys, pleasures and benefits that great trees provide.

Greg Moore  
October 2021

## Burnley Graduate Profile October 2021 - John Fitzgibbon



**Years at Burnley:** 1990-1994

**Course studied:** Bachelor of Applied Science Horticulture

**Favourite subject:** Plant Materials

**Favourite plant:** *Geijera parviflora* (Australian Willow, Wilga)

**I decided to go to Burnley because:**

My father Ray was born and raised in the Western District in Koroit and Port Fairy, part of a large Roman Catholic family of 15 children, of which Ray was the eighth. Ray

had a 30-year career in Australia Post (originally PMG) where he attained the position of relieving Postmaster for many Gippsland towns. In 1980, at the late age of 48, he decided he wanted a more outdoor existence and to work more with plants. He began growing cut flowers and operating a landscaping business in the Latrobe Valley. I fondly recall the days Dad and I would tend the roses, carnations and gladioli on our five-acre block located on Old Maffra Rd, Tyers. I guess this is where I found the love of plants and the outdoors and a horticultural life was where I wanted to be. I enrolled in 1989 at the University of Melbourne, studying applied science, but it just wasn't the right fit. I then enrolled in the BASH at Burnley in 1990 at 19 years of age, thinking I wanted to become a Landscape Architect, with Burnley as a prelude to Landscape Architecture at RMIT. It soon became apparent to me that the growing and landscaping of plants was my path. I was soon to find it in the advanced tree industry.

**Since I graduated from Burnley I have:**

During and after Burnley, I worked for the Lawton family, who owned and operated Ronneby Tree Farm. This company in its heyday was cutting edge, with industry containerisation, using SpringRing™ (which, when improved, became RocketPots™), and provided many other field grown Root Control Bag and Ball and Burlap trees nationally. I moved from production horticulture and working with the trees into a sales support role under Tony Lizza (now Arbornet). Tony taught me a lot about the sales process, about many of the plants and about managing clients. It was a great experience working at Ronneby, I guess it provided me with a strong understanding of the tree industry.

With both parents running successful small businesses (mother Marge ran a very successful hairdressing business), it was natural for me to start my own business. I have now been Owner /Managing Director of Metro Trees since 1998.



## Burnley Graduate Profile October 2021 - John Fitzgibbon

Metro Trees was located in the heart of Melbourne in Alphington, with a one-hectare site and now we are located in Silvan on an 8-hectare site, the reasoning behind this being water security, location to Greater Melbourne and affordability. We accommodate approximately 25,000 trees in 20, 35, 50 and 90L anti-spiral containers. Lecturer James Will provided consultancy in the early period, with his horticultural writing skills and tree knowledge. My father was also instrumental in aiding the Metro Trees start up, donating many hours of his own time when funds were limited.

Metro Trees' markets have always been primarily local government and the commercial landscape industry, as they have a major role in new tree planting in our cities. Since the late 1960s it has been well established that the tree production environment has profound effects on the quality of



John's favourite tree—*Geiera parviflora*

woody nursery stock, and this is mirrored in my philosophy of tree growing, with much time spent on tree pruning of both roots and the shoot system. The tree industry has changed dramatically over the last 25 years since I was at Ronneby. Where field grown ball and burlap 100L trees were once the norm in the marketplace for councils and developers, from the 1980s through to the mid-1990s, 35L containerised trees have now overtaken this sector as the predominant industry size, with pricing and OH&S issues instrumental in the change.

To complement this, where the requirements of a species dictate, Metro Trees are firm believers in using containers that have been designed to help minimise some of the common faults that are still found in container-grown trees, and to help optimise root quality. This approach adds to their production costs, but we stand by our reasoning, believing that there is no substitute for this extra attention in the nursery.

## Burnley Graduate Profile October 2021 - John Fitzgibbon

My time at Burnley was up there with some of the finest times in my life. At this time, Burnley was like a horticultural High School where you were in a group of 40 students ranging in age from 18 – 40 and you knew most of your lecturers well and on a first name basis. I simply fell in love with the place, and the following four years were a memorable and exciting time. I had found an industry and nursery technical environment where I simply wanted to be; it still feels like home. Ah the memories of the Burnley times are so important to me and flood back in. So many great characters among the lecturers and students. John (Cecil) Delprat and Ross Hall doing their best Roy and HG repertoire in our plant propagation classes. I remember a certain Plant Materials lecturer teaching aquatic plants where he would put duck waders on and present from chest deep in the Burnley Gardens Pond. Quite extraordinary.

I remember Dr Peter May and his dulcet calming tones like tree leaves rustling in the wind, and Aunty Rosemary McConnell in the library. Always a smile and a discussion to be had. Memorably she had the ability to walk a disruptive student or even lecturer out of the library like a well-oiled pub bouncer. I salute your skills Rosemary. I will never forget one particular student who loved to party have a chat and be rather mischievous, during an engineering class dealing with 2 and 4 stroke engines where his temperament wasn't coping. The window was open and xxxx being a rock climber nimbly extracted himself and his backpack out the window while the lecturer's back was turned. The room erupted; the lecturer says "what's going on?", none the wiser.

There were certainly many more fascinating individuals than just listed above. I feel a kinship with Burnley as I feel with my greater Fitzgibbon family. Enough for now and when the time is right would like to talk all things climate shift, climate ready tree selection and a future advanced tree industry state.



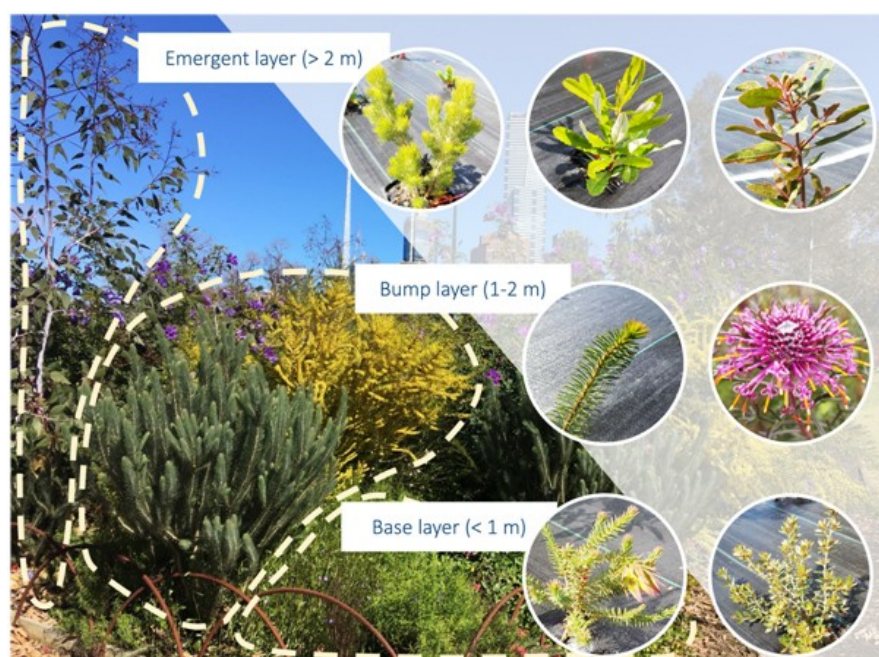


## The Woody Meadow Project—*update* October 2021

### NEWS ITEM 22 Oct A research update from PhD student Lavinia Hsiao-Hsuan Chu—Woody Meadow coppicing experiments underway

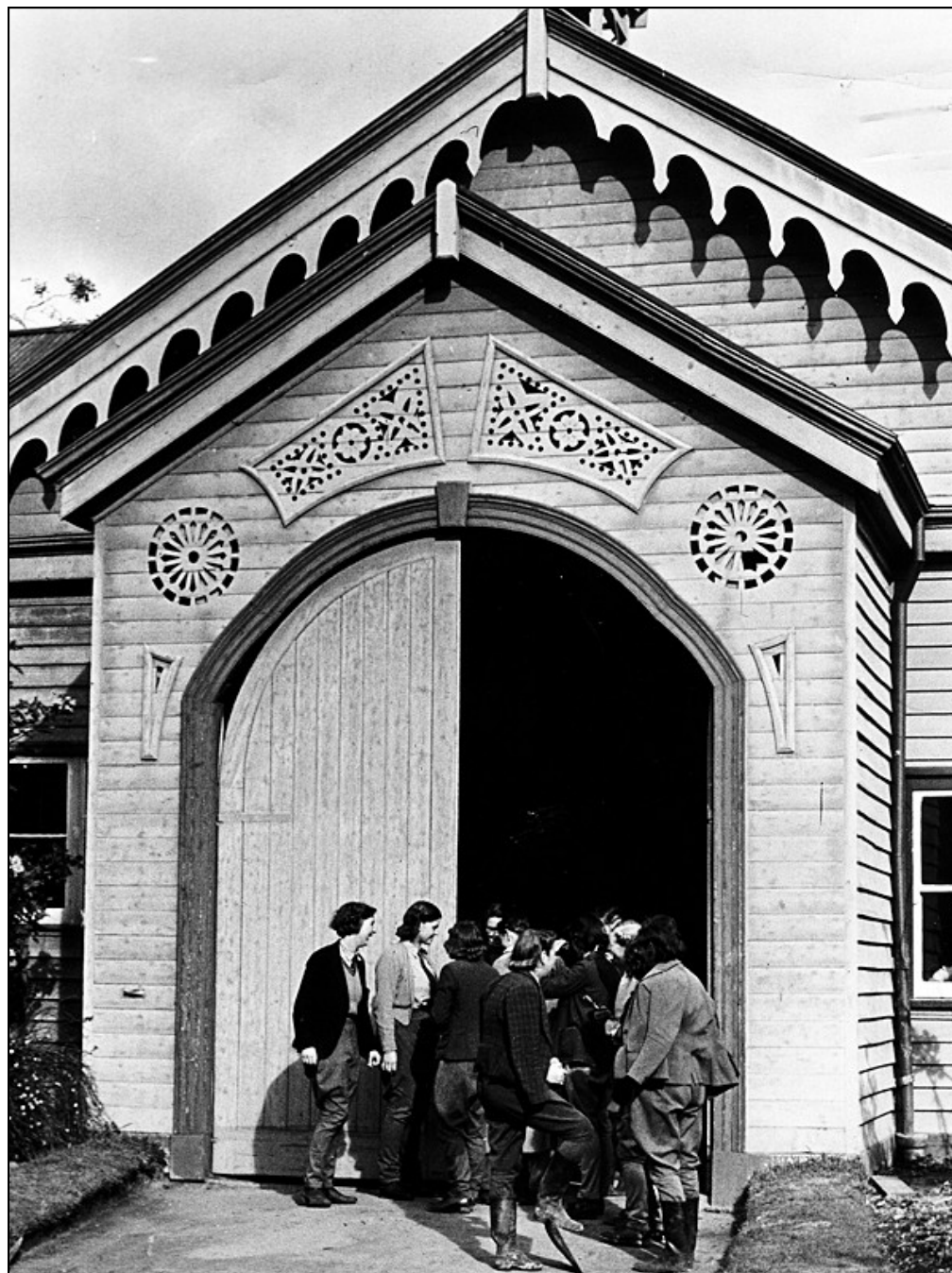
In late June PhD student Lavinia Chu and volunteers planted over 1000 Australian woody plants in the Burnley field station as part of a long-term coppicing experiment to evaluate plant response to coppicing. The results from this experiment – part of Lavinia's PhD research - will help inform the design of future Woody Meadows. The 77 species of shrubs and small trees vary in their mature height and when planted together create a three-layered Woody Meadow planting for different types of sites (Figure 1). Coppicing (hard-pruning of plants close to ground-level) regenerates plants and encourages dense canopies with lots of flowers, but not all plants can recover from losing most of their leaves and stems. Woody Meadow plants should ideally be strong re-sprouters and have vigorous growth after coppicing. Plants in this study will be coppiced over two years to determine which species recover better and how coppicing changes plant form. Through this research, Lavinia will also identify plant traits associated with strong re-sprouting. This will inform the design of more resilient Woody Meadows and expand the range of suitable plant species available to designers and open space managers.

The experimental plants are flowering and looking healthy since being planted four months ago. Lavinia will be undertaking the first coppicing in November.



**Figure 1.** Some of the species used in this experiment, grouped based on their mature height. **Emergent layer** (left to right): *Adenanthos sericea*, *Banksia marginata*, *Eucalyptus erythrocorys*. **Bump layer** (left to right): *Calothamnus robustus*, *Isopogon formosus*. **Base layer**: *Darwinia neildiana*, *Grevillea dimunata*. Images: Stefan Arndt (background photo of the Birrarung Marr Woody Meadow); Lavinia Chu (photos for the 7 species in the coppicing experiment).

Lavinia's PhD supervisors are Dr Claire Farrell, Dr Chris Szota and Prof Stefan Arndt



The Pavilion (nick-named "The Elephant House") - Burnley before the Main Building was built. Thanks to Jane Wilson for this image from the archives.

***NEWSLETTER  
OF THE  
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BURNLEY  
GARDENS***

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