

THE BOTANIC GARDEN

A Newsletter for the Botanic Gardens of Australia and New Zealand



Issue 17 - March 2007

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EDITORIAL

Spring in New Zealand

New Zealanders will sometimes acknowledge that Australians are good at flashy things like winning gold medals and selling time-shares on the Gold Coast. But at least when it comes to public gardens we can hold our heads up - no need to look at our feet and mumble. We've got plenty of excellent gardens as well as wonderful local flora, no poisonous insects and plenty of fresh water. In fact, if you are keen on gardens and horticulture why wouldn't you want to move to New Zealand! Or at least take an interesting little break here next spring courtesy of the boss. With this in mind we have a cunning plan – it is called...

The Biennial BGANZ Congress

11th –14th October 2007

Here are seven good reasons that will hopefully convince the boss.

- Specialised training opportunities for senior botanic and public garden staff don't come along very often, particularly with top quality speakers.
- Your glorious career is not only about what you know; it's who you know. So an opportunity to meet others in your field may mean the boss can get rid of you sooner than he had hoped.
- We need to overcome this mental block about going to a 'foreign country'. It costs less to fly from Sydney to Auckland than Sydney to Perth. The exchange rate makes accommodation affordable and NZ is practically owned by Australian banks anyway.
- It is probably a place you haven't been before. Hamilton Gardens is set alongside the magnificent Waikato River in the lush, fertile heartland of New Zealand. Just why do these gardens attract 1.3 million visitors each year? - over half of them tourists.
- We don't want to be personal but you are looking tired and drawn. You need to recharge your batteries and get inspired.
- The ideas for partnerships and the seminar on sponsorship could lead to ideas that will pay for the trip many times over.
- Museums, zoos and libraries have had their national organisations for years so BGANZ has been long overdue. But for BGANZ to succeed it is vital that you support its Congress to give substance to its credibility.

The next step is almost as easy as selling a time-share to a Kiwi. Just go along to the boss's door and knock ...

A full programme with keynote speakers will be sent out July 2007 but here are a few of the key dates to plan your spring visit to New Zealand around.

Theme: **Building Partnerships**

Thursday 11th October

BGANZ (NZ Branch meeting)

Pre-Congress Seminars on

'Sponsorship for Public Gardens' and 'Collection Management'.

BGANZ – AGM

Friday 12th October

- Full day of keynote and concurrent speakers
- Garden walkabouts after lunch
- Meeting of members of 'Friends' organisations
- Happy Hour and Barbecue

Saturday 13th October

- Full day of speakers
- Congress dinner

Sunday 14th October

- Full day field trip to Auckland Botanic Gardens with drop-off at Auckland - International Airport
- Half-day field trip to Maungatautari with drop-off at Hamilton International Airport

More details: www.sixhats.co.nz or www.hamiltongardens.co.nz

Contact: Amanda@sixhats.co.nz or Ph 647 853 614

CALL FOR APPLICATIONS

GRANTS TO ATTEND BGANZ CONGRESS

11th – 13th October 2007

Hamilton, NEW ZEALAND

BGANZ is once again offering travel grants to facilitate attendance by botanic gardens' staff, particularly from regional or distant gardens, at the forthcoming Congress, to be held in Hamilton, NZ from **11th – 13th October** this year.

Value

Two levels of grants will be made available:

- a grant of **A\$ 250** to applicants from **New Zealand**, and
- a grant of **A\$ 700** for **Australian** gardens, wherever they are geographically sited.

Eligibility and Conditions

All staff of botanic gardens are eligible to apply. However, in order for the 2007 Congress to be inclusive of public gardens across Australia and New Zealand, preference will be given to grants to support gardens that are members of BGANZ and have limited financial resources for attendance at the Congress. BGANZ is able to make grants totalling a maximum amount of **A\$ 6,000**.

Application

Applications for a BGANZ Grant for participation in the Congress should contain:

- a description (max 150 words) of how the grant would assist the employing garden,
- whether the garden or staff member is a member of BGANZ, and
- a letter of endorsement of the application from the Director or Officer in Charge of the sponsoring botanic garden.

Selection Criteria

Applications will be judged chiefly on the following criteria:

- value to the garden that would emanate from attendance at the Congress.
- a demonstrated need for assistance (distance, lack of Congress attendance budget, multiple staff from institution attending etc.)

Closing date for Application

Applications must be received no later than **Friday 18 May 2007** and should be sent to:

Virginia Berger
Executive Officer, BGANZ
GPO Box 1777
Canberra ACT 2601
Fax: (02) 6250 9599
Email: vberger@deh.gov.au

PEOPLE

New Director for Geelong Botanic Garden

Annette Zealley has been appointed Director of Geelong Botanic Garden, taking up her new position on 29 January. Annette brings extensive skills and experience to this position from her time as Coordinator, Dandenong Ranges Gardens, and this will ensure a smooth transition in continuing the developments at GBG initiated by John Arnott over recent years. Annette is also an active member of the BGANZ Council.

John Arnott has moved to a position with the City of Melbourne. John has been a stalwart supporter of Botanic Gardens for many years, and played a significant role in organising the highly successful Inaugural BGANZ Congress, held in Geelong in 2003. He has overseen exciting developments at Geelong Botanic Gardens, especially the innovative 21st Century Garden, opened in 2003. We wish him well in his new position and offer thanks for his significant contribution to the Botanic Gardens community.

MEETINGS AND CONFERENCES

3rd Global Botanic Gardens Congress

Wuhan, China

April 16-20, 2007-02-07

“Building a sustainable future: the role of botanic gardens”.

Organized by

Botanic Gardens Conservation International (BGCI)

Chinese Academy of Sciences (CAS)

Hubei Provincial Government

Wuhan Municipal Government

The Global Botanic Gardens Congress is held every three years and is recognized as the primary international event for botanic gardens worldwide. This is the first time a Congress has been held in Asia and will mark the 20th anniversary of BGCI.

Discussions in Wuhan will centre around the important theme of the Global Strategy for Plant Conservation. The Congress will provide a global forum for the botanic garden community to share their knowledge, experience, practice and research. An exciting scientific programme is being prepared, which includes presentations by distinguished international speakers, symposia on a wide range of topics, participatory workshops, field excursions and garden visits.

For further information:

E-mail: 3gbgc@wbpcas.cn

Web: www.3gbgc.com

ITEMS OF INTEREST

An exciting first for Botanic Gardens!

In Sydney on Friday 23 February the new Australian Garden at the Royal Botanic Gardens Cranbourne, a division of the Royal Botanic Gardens Melbourne, was judged the Award Winner for the Best New Tourism Development in Australia for 2006. It is the first time that a botanic garden has won this Award. This innovative and imaginative garden was opened by the Premier of Victoria, Steve Bracks in May last year and has quickly become a popular tourist destination.

The Gardens Shop at RBG Melbourne and Aspects of Kings Park, WA were both finalists in the Tourism Retailing category, and were runners-up to the shop at Steve Irwin's Australia Zoo.

BGANZ GOES TO WUHAN

The International Networking and Co-operation policy being developed for BGANZ by Dan Bishop will be given a high profile at the 3rd Global Botanic Gardens Congress in Wuhan, China, in April.

BGANZ is jointly organising an international co-operation and capacity-building workshop at the Congress, together with Botanic Gardens Conservation International and the South-East Asian Botanic Gardens Network. The workshop will be open to all Asian and Pacific delegates attending the Congress and will be an ideal forum in which to discuss how BGANZ and its members in New Zealand and Australia can assist public gardens in the Asia/Pacific region.

The Wuhan workshop will build on the one held at the BGANZ Congress in Hobart in October 2005, when many attendees expressed the view that BGANZ should support botanic gardens in neighbouring regions with technical expertise, support and training.

The Wuhan workshop will be held on the afternoon of Sunday, 15 April. It aims to achieve practical outcomes and identify specific capacity-building initiatives. The workshop program will include short introductions about the South-East Asian Network and BGANZ, presentations highlighting the common interests between gardens of the Asia/Pacific region, case studies of capacity-building projects, and exploration of how collaboration between gardens can best be achieved.

Philip Moors

Royal Botanic Gardens Melbourne

International Networking for Botanic Gardens

Many of you will be aware of the Botanic Gardens Conservation International (BGCI) document *2010 Targets for Botanic Gardens*

http://www.bgci.org/worldwide/bg_targets as an important international agreement developed at the 2nd World Botanic Gardens Conference in Barcelona in 2004. It provides us, as botanic garden managers, with a guide toward measurable outcomes to assist worldwide plant conservation targets. But what does it mean for our already established conservation agenda including national collecting programs, rare and threatened display gardens, strong interpretive messages and funded education programs? Of course we can continue to develop in our performance and presentation of these contributions, but the 2010 targets, to me at least, point to where the coal face is.

As botanists, horticulturists and educators we should be asking ourselves how we can contribute to the 2010 Targets. I'd draw your attention to the excellent article provided by Lorraine Perrins in BG News (Vol 16, pp9-13) for a stimulating background to the importance of engaging in international conservation and the primary role of botanic gardens. Indeed our success in achieving conservation outcomes through supporting botanic garden communities in developing regions can greatly assist in defining our relevance as conservation agencies into the future.

BGANZ has a role to play in all this, both as a peak body for botanic gardens and as a facilitator for involving individual gardens in international capacity-building programs. BGANZ has been preparing an International Networking and Co-operation Policy to guide its activities. The policy's purpose is to define the scope and direction of BGANZ's international relations. It can help individual BGANZ gardens articulate reasons for participating and provide the basis for determining the level of involvement to which each may be able to commit. It may allow existing international projects to obtain additional institutional support and assist new projects seeking funds or sponsorship opportunities.

The policy does not instruct BGANZ member gardens on how to run international programs, but rather provides the guiding principles behind our efforts and outlines the main roles and strategies with which they may be achieved. Each organisation will therefore need to determine how best to implement this strategy with the resources that are available.

We can look to BGANZ as our peak body to provide support and guidance. Together we can pool resources, experiences and ideas to ensure the burden of running international programs is shared. I also believe it can add to the cultural diversity of our working lives through increased contact with the international community and in establishing working partnerships within BGANZ. It can provide a creative and constructive outlet for staff wanting to contribute further to 2010 Targets for Botanic Gardens.

BGANZ has been invited to jointly host a capacity-building workshop at the 3rd Global Botanic Gardens Congress in Wuhan, China, on 15 April together with gardens and regional gardens networks from Asia and the Pacific. Discussions are also under way with BGCI as to the role of BGCI Asia in assisting BGANZ's interaction with Asian botanic garden networks.

Dan Bishop

Mount Annan Botanic Garden, Botanic Gardens Trust Sydney

Australian Botanic Gardens – a National Climate Change Adaptation Strategy

At the CHABG meeting held in Adelaide on 30 November 2006, agreement was reached that Australia's botanic gardens need to work together to address the challenge of climate change. As well as a challenge, it also represents a significant opportunity for botanic gardens to contribute to global conservation outcomes.

Climate change is of increasing importance and significance in the national and global conservation context. It is likely to result in higher temperatures, changed rainfall patterns, rising sea-levels and more frequent or intense storms, droughts and floods. These changes are expected to have a range of impacts on natural and human systems across Australia. The most vulnerable Australian ecosystems have been identified to include coral reefs, highland rainforests, alpine regions, coastal wetlands, and the heathlands of southwest Western Australia (more information on climate change is available on www.greenhouse.gov.au). While impacts are broadly known at a national scale further work is required to improve knowledge of impacts at regional and local levels.

Australia's over 150 botanic gardens are key centres for knowledge, education and ex-situ conservation in relation to Australia's plant biodiversity. There are many plant conservation questions relating to climate change which botanic gardens are well placed to help answer.

- *How might different species respond to climate change?*
- *Which are the plant species most at risk?*
- *How well are they represented in living collections, seed banks and gene banks?*
- *Is there a practical conservation role for ex-situ conservation to support these plants?*
- *Do we know how to propagate and cultivate these plants?*
- *Which gardens are best placed to address ex-situ conservation of particular species?*
- *Should we prioritise our living collections?*
- *Which species are likely to become weeds and how might they be managed?*

In addition botanic gardens are places visited by hundreds of thousands of visitors each year and they potentially can have an important role in educating the community about climate change and its impacts on biodiversity and about sustainable living practices generally.

The Council for Australian Governments (COAG) is keen to ensure that our nation's resources are organized in a way that will effectively support climate change decision making at the national and regional levels. An Australian Botanic Gardens National Climate Change Adaptation Strategy will ensure that we can all work together in a collaborative, coordinated, effective and efficient way to ensure plants and plant communities are conserved.

Anne Duncan

Director

Australian National Botanic Gardens

Whilst much of Australia is experiencing drought conditions, the Mackay Regional Botanic Gardens has a different problem, having recently experienced floods, with over 500 mm of rain falling in 5 days.

Helen Paulsen and Dale Arvidsson report on this work-in-progress.

Update from Mackay Regional Botanic Gardens

Branches and small trees succumbed to the weight of so much water - as did some of the garden area fringing the Lagoons - the gardens central water features. Mackay often experiences summer deluges, followed by mini-drought conditions in the Spring and early summer. The challenge has been to showcase 'water wise' plant species that suit the sub-tropics and can also take these extreme seasonal conditions. The majority of local native species have adapted well, but many southern and dry lands species have not fared so positively.

The soils of the gardens are rich alluvial loams that retain moisture well, however in large rain events, the soil becomes water logged and takes a number of weeks to dry out. The succulent collection has had a number of losses, particularly the aloe species. Modifications to the soils in this collection area are being considered.

The balancing of the soil type will however need to provide anchorage in wind conditions that are also associated with summer storms and adverse weather conditions.

The Mackay Regional Botanic Gardens continues to grow with new plantings that have flourished over the summer months in Stage 2 development. Visitors to the Gardens have noticed the Coastal Lowlands Garden along the Lagoon Edge in full bloom with Everlasting Daisy - *Xerochrysum bracteatum* - making a stunning display of yellow blooms. Staff and volunteers have been busy planting the Sterculiaceae Garden and the strange shapes and swollen trunks of Boab, Bottle, Flame, Kurrajong and Lacebark Trees will soon make an eye-catching sight. Many of the stage 2 plantings that went in during October have grown from tube stock size to around one meter in height, thus producing a visible result in a few short months. The combination of moisture, heat and good soils provide ideal conditions for healthy, fast growth.

Some highly ornamental plants are at their spectacular best in summer. Ornate Fruited Neisosperma - *Neisosperma kilneri* is a lush evergreen rainforest tree - and currently loaded with colourful inedible fruit and deliciously scented flowers, whilst Brown Kurrajong - *Commersonia bartramia* - a common sight along local creek lines is also flowering profusely - owning up to one of its common titles of "Snow-in-Summer". The micro habitats are starting to develop in the previously developed areas, with many of the local birds and reptiles taking up residence and breeding future generations. The majority of inhabitants are appreciated by the visitors, however a few of the larger Eastern Brown Snakes have also found the gardens to be an ideal home.

The Visitors Program is gearing up for the cooler months approaching. The volunteer Gardens Friends have planned their busiest year to date with planting bees, guided tours, school visits and special excursions to Mackay's natural areas. The Gardens Friends year commenced with a walk through the previously planted Screens and Hedges Gardens to acquaint some of the newer members with the plants that grow well from the local area. This was followed by a Barbeque on the deck, relocated due to rain on the evening, but enjoyed by all. A new plant propagation area is also planned for the Friends and many are itching to get their hands dirty and make the most of the extensive seed bank already being produced by the Gardens flora - now almost 4 years old.

*Helen Paulsen, Curator and Dale Arvidsson, Visitor Services Officer
Mackay Regional Botanic Gardens*

The following article is intended to whet the appetite of any readers who cannot decide whether or not to attend the BGANZ Congress to be held in Hamilton next October. This comprehensive guide from Geoffrey Doube, together with the magnificent accompanying photos, will undoubtedly encourage attendance.



Feature Garden

Hamilton Gardens, Hamilton, New Zealand

Hamilton Gardens is a publicly owned city park with an innovative conceptual basis that goes significantly beyond the traditional botanic garden model. In particular, Hamilton Gardens has developed towards an ethnogarden design concept. In this article we will briefly discuss this concept as well as providing some background information on Hamilton Gardens.

The Site

Hamilton Gardens occupies 53 hectares at the southern end of Hamilton City. State Highway 1 runs along its northern border; the Waikato River curves around its south and western borders. The section of the river that runs beside the Gardens is narrow, deep and fast flowing. This has created high, steep riverbanks along most of the site. Additionally, the fact that the Gardens are situated between the flat land of Hamilton East to the north and the river to the south means that the terrain



is predominantly characterised by a more or less southward-sloping aspect. There is a small lake in the middle of Hamilton Gardens that is fed mainly by rainwater runoff from the nearby highway and residential areas, and which supports thriving populations of native eels, rudd, perch and turtles, as well as water fowl and aquatic and marginal plants. The Gardens are bisected by a gully system that both fills the lake and empties it into the Waikato River. The combination of sections of steeper hillside with areas of even ground effectively divide the Gardens into 'upper' and 'lower' zones. Geologically the upper zone is a terrace formed by fluvial deposits from the Hinuera formation with some

top & above:
Waikato River alongside Hamilton Gardens

pyroclastic fall and flow deposits from various volcanic events, while the lower terrace is formed by much more recent pumice alluvium from the most recent Taupo eruption circa 200 AD. Soil maps drawn circa 1980 show that the upper parts of the site are mainly Ohaupo series loam, with some gley in the upper reaches of the gully system. The lower parts, by contrast, are mostly Waikato series pumice soil with areas of (now stable) historical rubbish fill. The profile of the lower zone has been substantially modified from its original topography by the rubbish fill and by work that has been done subsequently.

A remnant stand of original native flora exists along the riverbank on the eastern end of the gardens. It is considered to be one of most important local native plant collections and is a source for genetic seed material. Due to the topography of the area, visitor access to the stand is very limited and while some accessways will eventually be developed, it is anticipated that any foot traffic through the area will be tightly controlled in order to minimise damage.

Many of the smaller buildings on the site are associated with and part of the various garden developments (e.g the Golden Pavilion in the Chinese Scholar's Garden), but Hamilton Gardens also includes a number of buildings of some significance. The Municipal Nursery and the Victorian Garden Greenhouse are located on the higher, northern edge while the Wintec Horticultural Education Centre, the Hamilton Gardens Pavilion and the Terrace Restaurant and Café are all located in the centre of the gardens on the lower terrace. Visitor density tends to be highest on the lower terrace; this has the welcome effect that the nursery does not tend to intrude on visitor experience.



History

In Pre-European times Te Parapara, a part of Ngati Wairere, occupied the centre of the current site of Hamilton Gardens. Traditional Maori society in general tended to be agronomically based, and in particular the people of Ngati Wairere were renowned for their horticultural skill. Te Parapara became an important site for sacred practices related to food crops and fertility.

top & above:
Chinese Scholar's Garden

At the elevated eastern end of the Hamilton Gardens site, with commanding views both up and down the Waikato River, are the remains of the Narrows Redoubt, a British military post built in the early 1860s as a defensive position during the Waikato Wars. Many of the first settlers of the nascent Hamilton township

were soldiers who had manned the redoubt. The earliest occupancy of Hamilton East Cemetery, which was laid out in 1863 and is now itself part of Hamilton Gardens, might even include some of those men. However, the military aspect to Hamilton Gardens' history extends beyond the exploitation of its strategic location during times of conflict. In peacetime the area included the Rifle Range Reserve and was host to the annual 'Military Day' until well after the turn of the century. It has also been suggested that it was on this rifle range in 1906 that the NZ Empire and National Defence League began, which proposed to reform the national defence system by establishing compulsory military training for all men of the Dominion.

Around 1900, Bateson's Nursery was established on northern edge of the Gardens. Bateson's became the Municipal Nursery in 1951, and the site continues to provide for most of Hamilton City's public planting requirements. In time the nursery would provide the kernel of the development of Hamilton Gardens; but there was very little development until at least 1960. In the interim, and in some cases for a time afterwards, the Hamilton Gardens site was used for (among other things) a go-kart track, netball courts, a dog pound, a Council works depot and a municipal rubbish dump.

Four acres adjoining the nursery were converted from town belt for the purposes of establishing a botanical garden in 1960. One of these acres had been converted two years earlier and a tropical glasshouse had been built upon it. Thus when Hamilton Gardens officially opened on 24th July 1960 it comprised the Tropical Display House set within four acres of Gardenesque planting, which was, at the time, a common style in the public gardens of New Zealand provincial centres. These original four acres and the Greenhouse have been preserved and incorporated into the current garden plan as 'The Victorian Flower Garden'.



The Rogers Rose Garden was the next garden to be developed. It made a significant impact upon Hamilton's citizens; this can be seen when it is considered that most locals still erroneously call Hamilton Gardens "the rose gardens". The Rogers Rose Garden was ready for the first World Rose Convention in 1971. However, a decade without any significant further development was to pass until the early 1980s, when the present development programme was put into action. While the original vision for Hamilton Gardens c.1960 had been for a botanical garden 'proper', featuring specimen glasshouses and taxonomic plant collections with a gardenesque design philosophy,



top: Temperature House above: Rogers Rose Garden

the architects of the 1980 plan had their sights on something quite different. In particular, they argued that the primary functions of traditional botanical gardens were already being provided for by gardens both in Hamilton and the wider region and therefore that further development in Hamilton Gardens should be designed to complement, rather than compete with, these existing parks.

Design/ Philosophy

The fundamental conceptual shift that facilitated the development of Hamilton Gardens in its current direction was the movement away from *ecological* or *ethnobotanical* thinking about botanical gardens, and towards an *ethnogarden* approach. Rather than focus on the relationship between plants and their environment (*ecological*), or on the relationship between plant species and people (*ethnobotanical*), an ethnogarden design philosophy endeavours to display some aspects of the relationship between people and gardens. The stated objective of Hamilton Gardens is “to encourage the appreciation and understanding of gardens, their history, context and meaning”. There is clearly some divergence in this objective from Wyse Jackson’s definition of a botanic garden as adopted by the Botanic Gardens Conservation International: “botanic gardens are institutions holding documented collections of living plants for the purposes of scientific research, conservation, display and education”. Broadly speaking, while Hamilton Gardens fulfils this and similar definitions, it does not only do so by operating as ‘a museum of living plants’; but also by immersing the visitor in the history and art of garden design.

One important implication of an ethnogarden approach is that it puts the art of garden design itself on display. Garden design is not treated simply as a means to an end; for example, as a way of displaying taxonomic plant collections to their best effect. It is treated as an end in itself. The visitor’s attention is not directed solely at the plants in the garden, but towards all the other features of the garden, as well as towards the garden ‘as a whole’. The design of a particular garden moves from being a fixed, ‘given’ background to a contingent, historical foreground. Underlying the ethnogarden approach is the idea that gardens through history have expressed the most fundamental attitudes and worldviews of their makers and therefore that we can learn about ourselves through experiencing the multifarious gardens that we have designed and lived in. Plant collections by themselves, when organised according to a perception of a naturally occurring taxonomic or geographical order, do not express or represent human ideas, philosophies or conceptual schemes (except perhaps incidentally; by expressing the Linnaean urge to gain mastery over nature by classifying and categorising it). But when plant collections are contextualised in gardens whose overall structure is intended to be part of the ‘text’ that visitors are ‘reading’, they become one aspect of a potent, meaningful investigation into humankind’s various understandings of itself and the world.

At Hamilton Gardens there are presently five Garden Collections:

Paradise Garden Collection: Gardens that illustrate the gardener's desire to create paradise on Earth. The English word 'paradise' derives from the Old Persian '*pairidaeza*', meaning simply 'enclosed garden'.

- **The Chinese Scholar's Garden:** a traditional Chinese garden from the Sung Dynasty (10th – 12th centuries).
- **The Japanese Garden of Contemplation:** a garden from the Muromachi period (14th – 16th centuries).
- **The English Flower Garden:** an Arts and Crafts style garden, based on the garden design of Gertrude Jekyll and the architecture of Edwin Luytens.
- **The American Modernist Garden:** a 20th century garden in the West Coast style of Thomas Church.
- **The Italian Renaissance Garden:** based on 15th-16th century gardens of the flowering of modern European culture.
- **The Indian Char Bagh Garden:** a 'Kursi-cum-char-bagh' (riverside garden) based on the 15 - 16th century gardens of the Mughal Emperors.

The Landscape Garden Collection: some of the main landscape garden traditions, which have been inspired by different philosophical perspectives throughout history. Landscapes as artefacts contain a richness of expression and a subtlety, which can illuminate our relationship with the natural world.

- **The Buçaco Woodland:** named after the famous Portuguese walled forest, this garden illustrates the idea that spiritual enlightenment can be attained by rejecting worldly concerns and communing with nature.
- **The Park Cemetery:** the Hamilton East Cemetery has been preserved and maintained as an example of public cemetery parks from the late 19th to early 20th centuries.
- **The Echo Bank Bush:** an area of remnant indigenous flora, maintained in the modern Conservationist/Ecological tradition.
- **The Valley Walk:** a modern landscape garden in the Naturalistic/Aesthetic style, which is guided by the imperatives of location and region.
- **Proposed Gardens:** The Formal Landscape Garden; The English Landscape Garden.

The Productive Garden Collection: a group of gardens that illustrate the relationship between people and productive plants. In particular, they demonstrate that the process of gardening can be understood from the perspective of Nature as well as of Culture.

- **Te Parapara:** named after the pre-European pa that stood on the site of Hamilton Gardens, Te Parapara illustrates traditional Maori agrarian practice.
- **The Herb Garden:** culinary, cosmetic, perfume and medicinal herbs planted in the style of a traditional herb garden.
- **The Kitchen Garden:** A traditional 18th/19th Century European Kitchen Garden worked on by students of Wintec.
- **The Sustainable Backyard:** an example of a small garden that illustrates permacultural and ecological principles as they can be applied in a family backyard.



top down:

Chinese Scholar's Garden
Japanese Garden of Contemplation
English Flower Garden
Modernist Garden
Italian Renaissance Garden
Indian Char Bagh Garden

The Cultivar Garden Collection: Gardens that contain plant collections demonstrating the story of plants that have been bred for the garden.

- **The Rogers Rose Garden:** a rose garden demonstrating the history and development of the rose from the species to the modern hybrids. It includes a major NZ rose trial ground and has recently been presented with the 'Garden of Excellence Award' by the World Federation of Rose Societies.
- **The New Zealand Cultivar Garden:** collections of cultivars bred from New Zealand's indigenous plants.
- **The Rhododendron Lawn:** a selection of species and cultivars focussing on the development of the modern azalea and rhododendron.
- **The Hammond Camellia Garden:** a garden with species and modern cultivars.
- **The Victorian Flower Garden:** this garden includes the original greenhouses and beds featuring plants bred for colour and displayed in the Gardenesque tradition.

The Fantasy Garden Collection: these gardens illustrate the use of fantasy and imagination in garden design, and the use of garden design to stimulate fantasy and imagination in visitors.

Community Involvement

It can be seen that Hamilton Gardens has been designed to be an attraction that caters for a much wider section of the community than merely the horticultural enthusiasts. While the needs of horticultural interest groups are very ably catered for, much effort has gone into developing reciprocal relationships with the wider community. Visitor experience is crucial, and Hamilton Gardens has pursued robust quality assurance programmes to ensure that the needs of visitors are being met and that any areas of concern are efficiently remedied.

The students of Wintec Horticultural Education campus within Hamilton Gardens offers courses in amenity horticulture, arboriculture, landscape design and floristry. As part of the students' working space, the Kitchen Garden is open to the public.



The Friends of Hamilton Gardens form another integral partnership with the gardens. Crucially, they staff the Information Centre 363 days per year, as well as taking guided tours of the gardens for visiting groups. Also, there have been a number of trusts established with the aim of generating funding for, and encouraging community involvement with the development of particular gardens. For example, the Japanese Garden Trust was established in 1996 with the Japanese Consul-General as its patron for the sole purpose of supporting the development of that garden. The trusts have proven to be an integral part of achieving the aim of a high level of community involvement in the gardens amongst diverse groups, from the Hamilton Permaculture Trust to the NZ Chinese Association.

Hamilton Gardens is a focal point of the local events calendar. Community groups, including various horticultural clubs, use the Pavilion to hold annual and biannual events. The gardens have also become a very popular wedding destination. In particular, the Paradise Garden Collection is usually solidly

top: **Victorian Flower Garden**
above: **Kitchen Garden**

booked for weddings between November and March. Hamilton Gardens also hosts the annual Pacific Rose Bowl Festival. The Rogers Rose Garden has recently been presented with the 'Garden of Excellence Award' by the World Federation of Rose Societies; an award that recognises exceptional rose gardens and their associated rose trials.

Future Directions

Hamilton Gardens will continue to develop and build on its unique design concept. A unique concept, however, also requires a unique approach to interpretation. Much of the current development is focussed on providing interpretive resources that are consonant with the 'story of gardens' theme. The Information Centre is undergoing a major new extension and refit, and it is intended that the customer service provided by the Friends of Hamilton Gardens becomes integrated with the customer service provided by Hamilton City Council staff. One important aspect of this integration is the development of an information portal that offers access to a centralised source of information about Hamilton Gardens, and which will be usable by visitors as well as staff and volunteers. Through this and other interpretive resources, it is hoped that each visitor will be able to access the level of interpretive information that they require. Hamilton Gardens is put to a very wide range of uses by its visitors; it is at once a free city park that is used by locals as their regular recreational venue, and a significant tourist destination that attracts visitors specifically for its design concept. Thus there is also a wide range (in depth and medium as well as in topic) of informational services which will be available. Once again, these will be appropriate to the overall concept; for example, extensive signage in most of the gardens would detract from the overall effect. The challenge, therefore, is to adopt alternative media for interpretation which is in-depth but unintrusive, and which allows the visitor to take in as much or as little as they prefer. This is a challenge which Hamilton Gardens has taken up with enthusiasm.

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Hamilton Gardens*

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